# UNITY

FREEDOM FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

(Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Editor 1880-1918)

*Editors*

**John Haynes Holmes** **Francis Neilson**

# A Gandhi Number

*Including*

## Gandhi's Presidential Address

(*Printed for the first time in America*)

## Has Gandhi Failed?

*By* JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

## Gandhi the Realist

*By* HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR

VOLUME XCV NUMBER 5

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# UNITY

"HE HATH MADE OF ONE ALL NATIONS OF MEN"

VOLUME XCV MONDAY, MARCH 30, 1925 NUMBER 5

## Has Gandhi Failed?

On the 4th of February last, Mahatma Gandhi, the great leader of the Indian people in the amazing renaissance of their national life, was released from prison after serving nearly two years of a six years sentence. This event seems to present a fitting opportunity to renew our tributes to this remarkable man, one of the greatest statesmen of our time and one of the three or four greatest spiritual geniuses of all time, and to remind ourselves anew of the incomparable hold which he enjoys upon the imagination and devotion of his people. The world has seen nothing like it since the days when Jesus walked in Galilee! When the news was spread abroad through the country in January of 1924 that Gandhi was sick unto death in his prison-cell, a great wave of popular feeling swept like a convulsion of nature from one end of India to the other. When the President of the All-India Congress appointed January 18th as a day of prayer, unnumbered millions of men and women bowed themselves in petition for the great Mahatma. When at last, on February 4th, by order of the British government, he was released and thus restored to freedom, a cry of universal joy went up from all the land. Immediately, although a desperately sick man Gandhi stepped again into the position of national leadership. Two years had passed since he disappeared behind the prison-bars, but there was nobody to dispute his ascendency. As the time drew near for the meeting of the All-India Congress in December, it was felt that Gandhi must of course resume his old position as President. He was promptly elected to this high office, and thus again became officially what he has for so long been spiritually, the personal embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of all his people. Gandhi's influence today is greater over a larger number of people than that of any other man who has ever lived. It is the influence of a soul known in its time to be of perfect purity and of utter dedication to the divine will. Gandhi is a saint worshipped while living, as some few others have been worshipped when dead, by millions of his fellow-beings.

But I propose to speak not so much of Gandhi, as of the present situation in India—and thus not so much for its own sake as for the sake of the light which it sheds upon the perennially fascinating problem of non-resistance. Gandhi, as we know, is engaged in what is in many ways the most amazing experiment the world has ever seen. With utter deliberation and incalculable faith, he is undertaking to utilize the non-resistant ideal as a method for attaining such a stupendous end as the liberation of his country from the rule of the most powerful empire on earth. He proposes to restore his nation to its ancient freedom and native culture by disciplining its people to the technique of non-violent coercion. We have seen this tried in the case of individuals and small social groups, as witness Jesus and Tolstoy. Garrison tried it in America and Gandhi himself in South Africa for the emancipation of an enslaved class in a single community. But never before has anybody else ever attempted to achieve by this method the liberation of an entire people. It is a stupendous adventure, and on its success or failure hangs the destiny of more than India. What makes the issue of importance at this moment are the reports which are coming across the seas of disappointment and failure. Some of you have heard the story of how Gandhi's policy was saved from defeat at an important meeting by a margin of only four votes. All of you, I assume, have read the account of Gandhi's three weeks' fast in penance for the disobedience of his people to his ideal. Now comes the report that in the final crisis of the All-India Congress last December, Gandhi agreed to the "suspension" of his program of reform, and thus "surrendered" to his opponents. It is these events which raise the question as to whether the Mahatma has not failed in his great adventure. This question is important in its personal form, to those at least who reverence Gandhi beyond any other man alive upon this planet. But the question has a deeper and wider significance in its impersonal form, for it involves the whole problem of the practicability of non-resistance as a method of revolution. If non-resistance has failed under the leadership of such a man, can it ever be expected to succeed?

In order to understand what is going on, we must return to the meeting of the All-India Congress in Calcutta in September, 1920—now nearly five years ago—when at Gandhi's suggestion, and under his leadership, there was inaugrated the famous non-co-operative program for Indian independence, or *Swaraj* as it is called. This program was based upon the idea that the English government in India depends for its existence, as Gandhi puts it, "upon the co-operation whether conscious or unconscious, whether voluntary or forced, of the people." If this co-operation were withdrawn, he urges, the English could not continue in India a single week, or even a day; they would have to leave as a condition of their own survival. The main features of the program are familiar. It started off with what is known as the five-fold boycott—the boycott of all titles and honors under the English crown; the boycott of the local legislative councils and all participation in political elections; the boycott of English schools and colleges; the boycott of English courts, and the whole administration of English law; and the boycott of foreign cloth, the imported cotton which is worn almost exclusively by the native population. In addition, the non-co-operators were to disobey all oppressive decrees, and when arrested refuse to defend

themselves, and go to jail; and also to prepare themselves for the ultimate boycott of British rule, which was to be the refusal to pay taxes. On the positive side, the Calcutta program included the spinning of *Khaddar,* or native cloth, to the end of making the Indian people independent of English cotton; the promotion of Hindu-Moslem unity; the abolition of "untouchability"; and the removal of the drug evil and the drink evil. All through this program, of course, ran the principle of non-violence—that no resort to physical force of any kind was either justifiable or necessary—that the national deliverance could be achieved without drawing a sword, striking a blow, or shedding a drop of blood.

Such is the famous program of non-violent non-co-operation with which the name of Gandhi is destined forever to be associated. It stands as the most extensive and elaborate attempt that the world has seen to apply to vast problems of political and social statesmanship, affecting the lives of hundreds of millions of people, the great ideal of non-resistance. Many Indians in the Congress of 1920 did not believe in it, or could not understand it. Some of these, under the leadership of Annie Besant, retired from the Congress in protest against actions which they regarded as fantastic and thus impossible. Others, under the leadership of Mr. C. R. Das, remained in the Congress in obedience to the will of the majority. This majority supported the Mahatma, and thus inaugrated the campaign of non-violent non-co-operation as the accepted policy of the Indian people. Through the next year and more it was carried on with a success which seems incredible. The Indian people are ignorant and superstitious; they speak different languages and are the children of different cultures; like the people of Europe, they are rent and torn by ancient hostilities and fears. But something in Gandhi had caught their imagination. They rallied to him by the millions. All over the country the program was enthusiastically endorsed. Lawyers left their practice; children abandoned the schools, distinguished men, like Tagore, surrendered their titles. The people refused to purchase cotton cloth, and great bales were piled up mountain high upon the docks. In a few months arrests began, and the jails were crowded with thousands of offenders who allowed themselves to be arrested without striking a blow. It was inevitable that Gandhi, the responsible leader of the upheaval, should sooner or later be taken into custody; and at last, on the 10th of March, 1922, he was arrested, and on March 18th tried, convicted and sentenced to six years in prison for sedition. A physical breakdown, culminating in an operation which brought him to the very threshold of death, led to his release, as I have said, on the 4th of February, 1924.

During the first two or three months of his freedom, Gandhi could do nothing but seek the restoration of his health and strength. At last, when his convalescence was completed, he looked about upon his country, and found a situation very different from that which he had left two years before. In three directions at least he seemed to see disaster.

First of all, he discovered that the boycotts were everywhere breaking down, with the sole exception of the boycott of foreign cloth. In a frank statement in his recent address as President of the All-India Congress, Gandhi declares that "the majority of those who are immediately concerned have practically lost faith in (the boycotts)." He confesses that "scores of lawyers have resumed practice, and that hundreds of boys and girls who gave up government schools and colleges have repented of their action and have returned to them." Most serious of all was the break-down of the boycott of the legislative councils, for this implied an organized opposition. Within a year after the adoption of the Calcutta program, the All-India Congress was urged to lift the ban against the councils, so that champions of independence might run for office and thus fight for their cause inside the recognized political assemblies, but the verdict of the delegates was against them. The advocates of this change then organized a party inside the Congress, known as the *Swarajists,* headed by Mr. C. R. Das, who set themselves to convert the Congress to their opinion, with the result that at a special session of the Congress in September, 1923, the ban on political action was lifted for those who might otherwise feel free to contest elections. This was confirmed by the regular session of the Congress in December. All this created a situation which called for drastic action on the part of Gandhi, and at a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee he offered resolutions calling for an explicit reaffirmation of the original non-co-operation program. These resolutions were carried by a vote of 148 to 140. By any other leader in any other country this result would have been counted as a victory, and the advantage pressed to the uttermost. But not so by Gandhi! He confessed himself "utterly defeated and humbled." He insisted upon describing the vote as "a triumph for Mr. Das." Then, in a statement supremely characteristic of his great spirit, he declared that, in spite of their technical defeat, his opponents must go right on and carry out their policy. "They have no reason whatsoever," he said, "for withdrawing from the legislative bodies at the present moment."

But there was a second collapse of the Gandhi movement! I refer to the fact that the old religious feuds between the Hindus and the Moslems had been resumed as furiously as ever. A veritable revival of fanaticism broke upon the country in the summer of 1923. Arguments developed into fights, fights into riots, riots into bloodshed. The authorities were quick to interfere, but they succeeded only in giving a fresh illustration of their knowledge that the secret of successful imperialism is to "divide and rule." At last came something like a religious war in the town of Kohat, and the whole country threatened to burst into a conflagration. It was at this terrific moment that Gandhi announced that, in penance for the sins of his people, he was going to fast for a period of twenty-one days. The effect was like that of an earthquake shock. It was known that the Mahatma had only recently recovered from a dangerous operation. He was over fifty years old, weighed less than ninety pounds, and was in feeble health. His announcement seemed to be a sentence of death. At once there went up a cry of protest and humiliation. Within a few days leaders of the Hindu and Moslem faiths had come together and drawn up one of the most remarkable documents of religious reconciliation that I have ever seen. But Gandhi had made a vow which could not be broken; the outcome was now in the hands of God. For three weeks not a morsel of food passed his lips. At last, on the twenty-second day, a mere shadow of his former self, he took a drink of orange juice amid solemn ceremonies of religious brotherhood, and the fast was over.

This was the second disaster which Gandhi discovered on his release from prison. The third disaster was the resumption of open violence among the advocates of national independence. I have found it difficult to get any exact information upon this point, but I have seen accounts of political assassination, references to a so-called "cult of the bomb," and in Gandhi's writings a tacit recognition of the frustration of his non-resistant principles. Evidently, during the Mahatma's imprisonment, young and ardent spirits were converted to the doctrine of retaliation, and had turned to violence as the easy method of striking back at the government which had seized upon the person of their leader. The result of course was the discovery by the British of a terrorist conspiracy, and the application in the province of Bengal of the usual measures of repression. The attack of the authorities, strangely enough, was directed against the *Swarajists,* against whom Gandhi was fighting his battle for the retention of his boycott against the legislative councils. More than seventy of these *Swarajists,* many of them men of great distinction and unimpeachable character, were arrested and thrust into prison without trial. Gandhi was instantly aroused. In the face of persecution of this kind, there could be no division between those who were seeking the liberation of their native country from foreign rule. With a gesture supremely characteristic of his benignant spirit, Gandhi now performed one of the most sublime actions of his entire life. He met his opponents, the *Swarajists,* and offered to abandon not only the one boycott which was in controversy between them, but all the boycotts. The one need today, he said, is reconciliation and unity, a meeting together on the broadest possible platform of agreement. Therefore at his own initiative, as a test of his sincerity, as a voluntary offering of goodwill, Gandhi surrendered to his opponents, the *Swarajists,* all that they had been fighting for. And he did this not with reluctance, or regret, but with the joy of one who lives in the spirit of sacrificial love. "I have been charged," he says, "with having yielded everything to the *Swarajists.*" He does not agree that this is so, by any means; but "if I have done so," he continues, "I pride myself on the fact." And again he cries, "I thank God that he gave me strength to surrender to the *Swarajists* all that it was possible for me to surrender —much more than I or my friends had expected."

Now it is this "surrender" of Gandhi to the *Swarajists,* following upon the three disasters to the movement just described, which is being cited everywhere as evidence that the Mahatma has failed! As a matter of fact, the most casual examination of the agreement at the recent All-India Congress shows that Gandhi's program still stands in its essentials. Basic to this whole program is the principle of non-violence; on this there can never be surrender or even compromise. But there has never been any demand for either! "The *Swaraj* party," says Gandhi, "is a party of orderly progress. . . . It accepts non-violence as a policy, and it discountenances violence because it considers it to be useless if not even harmful." Next in importance in Gandhi's mind is the spinning of native cloth, which he believes is some day to destroy British rule in India by destroying its markets, and to repel the invasion of western capitalism by substituting the spinning-wheel in the home for the machine in the factory. This feature in Gandhi's program is not only retained but strengthened, for the new agreement provides that all members of the Congress must "make a contribution of 2000 yards of evenly spun yarn per month of his or her own spinning." What has been surrendered are the boycotts, against which there has been opposition from the beginning. But these were never offered as anything more than experimental devices for bringing some forms of coercive pressure to bear upon the British government other than those of violence and bloodshed. A large number of Gandhi's followers are now convinced after four or five years of actual experience that these devices are impracticable, and they would substitute for them new devices along lines of political agitation and opposition. What Gandhi has done is to concede to these people, the *Swarajists,* the same opportunity to test out their methods of reform that he has had to test out his methods since 1920. "Non-violence," says Mahatma Gandhi, "means utmost accommodation compatible with one's principles." The *Swarajists* "claim to be a growing party," and Gandhi would give them every opportunity to grow still more. Therefore he goes to the limit of his conscience to meet his opponents, and work with them on *their* terms, and not on his.

It is so obvious that Gandhi's program in its essential features is still in operation, that we must look elsewhere for an explanation of the very general feeling that the Mahatma has failed. This means that we must turn away from the specific details of his policy to the policy as a whole. What is Gandhi trying to do? What is the objective of his campaign? What is the task which he set himself when he laid down his program of non-violent non-co-operation at the Calcutta Congress in 1920?

The answer to this question is two-fold. In the first place, Gandhi is seeking the political independence of India, inside the Empire if possible, outside the Empire if necessary; and back of that, the deliverance of his country from all influences of western industry and culture. What he wants is to sever the bonds that bind India to the west, and thus to free her for the development of her own life in her one unhindered way. Now it is this goal which has not been reached after five years of unmeasured sacrifice and devotion. There is no reason in itself why it should have been reached in so short a space of time. Gandhi took twenty years to emancipate the Hindus in South Africa. The Irish struggled for centuries to win even that small measure of independence which they now enjoy. The duration of a conflict of this kind is measured more often by centuries than by years. But the hopes of the Indian people have been high. Gandhi himself promised them a triumph in a comparatively short period of time. And this triumph has not come! England seems to be as strong as ever. Gandhi has failed to liberate the land. In his recent address as President of the All-India Congress, he states his conviction that "non-violent non-co-operation as a means of attaining political freedom has come to stay," but with characteristic honesty and humility, he frankly confesses that "non-violent non-co-operation has not brought us *Swaraj.*"

But this is not the whole of the story, for it must be noted that Gandhi never sought nor promised deliverance for India in any absolute sense. On the contrary, he laid down conditions of the most definite kind, and never failed to make it clear that independence, or *Swaraj,* could not be had until these conditions had been fulfilled. This brings us immediately to the second object of Gandhi's program, which is the political and spiritual unification of his people. If the Indians want

to be free, they must end their differences and thus prove their fitness for self-government by revealing their capacity for self-control. They must become what they have never been at any time in the past—a single people, moved by a single impulse, dedicated to a single purpose, bound together by a single passion of love and brotherhood. It is this achievement of unity, said Gandhi, which is the indispensable condition of any release from western mastery; and it was with this fact in mind that he fashioned a program which was aimed not only at independence, but also, and more particularly, at that disciplining of a people which could alone make them fit for independence. Thus he demanded the abolition of "untouchability," by which is meant the outlawry of the 35,000,000 Hindus of the lowest caste who are regarded as "untouchable" by the other classes in the community. In the same way he called upon the Hindus and the Moslems to end their religious quarrels, and thus by natural forbearance and goodwill to become one people before God. It was with the same purpose in view that he offered his system of boycotts, that by their observance the Indians might concentrate their efforts for liberty on one single line of attack upon the enemy. In all these proposals, as I have said, Gandhi had in mind the disciplining of his people to a national unity of thought and action. No man could declare more definitely than he declared that, without this unity, *Swaraj* could never be attained. By the same token did he promise that, with this unity, *Swaraj* could be attained in a single year.

Now it is in the failure of this endeavor after unity in India which is the real explanation of the failure to attain independence, or even to make any perceptible progress in that direction. That Gandhi *has* failed in this second and fundamental object of his program, is perfectly plain. It is this which constituted the tragedy of what he discovered on his release from prison just a year ago. The ban of untouchability had been lifted from its millions of unhappy victims only in the case of a few scattered individuals. The Hindus and the Moslems were insulting one another, and every now and then resorting to rioting and bloodshed. Worst of all, the very boycotts which the Mahatma had formulated as a program of united action against the English, had become an occasion of division in the ranks of the Nationalists themselves. The *Swarajists* had no confidence in the program, and sought to change it.

"The No-changers," says Gandhi, "should not have been irritated over the lack of faith on the part of their erstwhile coworkers. They should have given them the same credit for honesty and patriotism that they claimed for themselves. But instead they violently opposed them."

Thus was the whole country rent with dissension. This meant that the work for independence could not continue on the old lines.

"We are face to face with a situation," said Gandhi, in his address as President of the All-India Congress, "that compels us to cry halt—We are not ready for Civil Disobedience. We can but prepare for it. Civil Disobedience is an impossibility till the prelminary work of construction is done."

"Therefore," he says in another place, "my attempt will now be in the direction of bringing all parties together without distinction of race, or color, or creed, on the ground of mutual toleration, and thus to demonstrate that the Congress non-co-operation was not conceived in or based on hate or malice."

This marks a new chapter in the Gandhi movement. Hitherto Gandhi has been aiming directly at national independence. Now he aims at that national unity without which independence is impossible. He is retreating, but only to consolidate his lines for a fresh advance.

It would be foolish, as it would be inaccurate, not to describe this development as failure. But it is the failure of—what? Of Gandhi? Of Gandhi's program? Not at all! What we have here is a failure neither of Gandhi nor of his program, but a failure of the Indian people to measure up to the stature of the leader whom God has given them. If Gandhi has made any mistake it is in overestimating the intellectual and spiritual capacity of his people. The result is the same as it was in the case of Jesus, who similarly overestimated the ability of his people to take up his cross and follow. All through the closing chapters of the Gospels there runs the undertone of disillusionment, rising at last to the climax of Gethsemane and the cry of despair upon the cross. I find the same undertone in the recent utterances of Mahatma Gandhi. His people have failed him. They have not had the patience and the courage to follow in his path. They have not been worthy of his sacrifices. Not that he blames them, or chastises them! All his criticism is visited upon himself for straining their spirit to the breaking point. But he is disappointed —disappointed alike in the people and in their leaders. Referring to his sadness on the occasion of that Committee meeting where his resolutions were all but defeated, he states that he was not sad because anybody had done him any wrong. "I was sad," he said, "because we were weighed in the scales of our own making and found wanting . . . My grief consisted in the doubt about my own ability to lead those who would not follow." Yet he didn't despair. "Defeat," he said, "cannot dishearten me. It can only chasten me." "I have abundant faith in my cause," he said on another occasion. "Indian humanity is no worse than any other; possibly it is better . . . Dark though the path appears, God will light it and guide my steps."

The failure in the present situation in India is the failure not of Gandhi but of his people. Acclaiming him, reverencing him, worshipping him, his followers have still found themselves incapable of obeying his word and heeding his example. The responsibility for disaster, therefore, is theirs and not his. Gandhi's failure, if it appear at all, can concern only what he himself has done in the face of his disillusionment. Three paths were open to him at the moment when he saw the chaos by which he was surrounded.

First of all, he could retire as leader of the Indian people in this crisis. He was tempted to do this at the Committee meeting where his resolutions were carried by so small a margin of votes. He was tempted again on the eve of the All-India Congress in December. But he came resolutely to feel that the desire to withdraw and thus abandon all further leadership was the voice of Ahriman, the Evil One speaking in his breast. "For me to run away from the Congress at the present moment," he said, "would be cowardice . . . I feel that I must not resist. On the contrary, I must let myself be used for the benefit of the country."

Secondly, as he saw the situation by which his movement threatened to be confounded, especially as he looked upon the oppositon in the party ranks stirred up by Mr. Das and his *Swarajist* followers, Gandhi could resort to the tactics followed with such vigor by Lenin and the Communist party in Russia. He could appeal to the rights and powers of a dictatorship, fight his opponents to defeat and overthrow, and then expel them from his movement. Gandhi had the opportunity at the famous Committee meeting to which we have referred, when his resolutions carried by a vote of 148

to 140. He had a second opportunity at the meeting of the All-India Congress when a resolute challenge on his part would have brought the majority to his side for any action that he might propose. The action of the Communists in such circumstances is familiar. The majority dictates to the minority what it must do. If the minority opposes, it is silenced, then disciplined, then as a last resort banished from the party. Periodically in Communist ranks there is a "purging" of the organization, by which is meant the excommunication of the defeated minority by the triumphant majority. To Gandhi such action is, of course, inconceivable. "I cannot impose my personal faith," he says, "on others, never on a national organization. I can but try to convince the nation of its beauty and usefulness." Those who oppose him he must "honor for their differences, and allow them to go their way." Only in respect to an appeal to violence, would he rise up and fight to the end, "even if I was alone." But even here he recognizes "that the nation has the right, if it so wills, to indicate her freedom by actual violence." Only in this case India would cease "to be the land of my love." But the *Swarajists* are not interested in violence. Therefore they must be treated with scrupulous justice and goodwill. They must be given full opportunity and privilege within the party counsels.

"I am aiming," says Gandhi, "at representation of all parties in the Congress, that we may learn to tolerate one another's opinions, may know one another better, may react upon one another."

To such a mind, any resort to methods of dictation, any overcoming of opposition by sheer force of numbers, was as impossible as the appeal to violence. Although the opposite from retirement or running away, this would have been equally with this first course, a confession of failure.

But there was a third course open to Gandhi as he faced last year's crisis in Indian affairs. I refer to Gandhi's own method of non-resistance—of loving one's enemies, of working with them rather than against them, of protecting them from humiliation and shame by visiting this humiliation and shame upon himself. When Gandhi, as a teacher in his school, found that one of his pupils had disobeyed and injured him, what did he do? Instead of punishing the boy, he imposed upon himself a twenty-four hour fast in penance for another's sin, therewith binding the offender to him in contrition and reverence forever. When Gandhi found the Hindus and Moslems quarreling and rioting, did he denounce them or summon them to judgment? On the contrary, he imposed upon himself the dreadful penance of the three-weeks fast. For the "transgressions" of these people was he "wounded," for their "iniquities" was he bruised, and therefore by "his stripes" were they "healed." In the same way, when he found himself confronted by these *Swarajists,* who were seeking changes in the program to which he had set his heart! Even when he still had the majority on his side, he surrendered to his opponents. Asked for coat, he gave his cloak also! Compelled to go a mile, he went with them twain!

"My opponents," he said, "have shown determination, grit, discipline, cohesion, and have not feared to carry their policy to the point of defiance . . . Though an uncompromising No-Changer, I must not only tolerate their attitude and work with them, but I must even strengthen them wherever I can."

Now just here, in the adoption of this third course of non-resistance toward those who have been opposing or betraying him, do we see the true character of Gandhi as a man. In this also do we see his victory as a leader! The Indian people, for a time at least, have failed; but their leader has succeeded as few men in history have ever succeeded. He has succeeded both outwardly and inwardly.

Outwardly he has succeeded by again uniting the people of India. Britain faces once more an undivided country. When Gandhi came from prison, the work of the years behind him was in ruins. Old hatreds, new jealousies, conflicting counsels and opinions, had torn the nation into hopeless and helpless factions. It seemed as though not even the spirit of this greatest of modern men could avail to reunite in bonds of friendly cooperation the widely scattered forces of the country. But the Mahatma has achieved the miracle. By the sacrifice not of principle but of pride, by the spirit not of dictation but of concession, by the alchemy not of hate but of love, he has lifted all men afresh unto himself. India is today started anew upon that road of discipline which leads not too far distant to the gleaming heights of liberty.

But Gandhi has succeeded not only outwardly with his distracted people, but inwardly as well with his own soul. If "he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city," then Gandhi is inded the greatest man of our time. During the last three years he has endured punishment at the hands of his enemies; he has met humiliation and defeat at the hands of his friends. He has seen his movement disrupted and its forces scattered. He has seen his followers refuse to follow. But he has not faltered in patience, nor swerved in courage. He has lost neither hope nor faith. Best of all he has kept sweet his soul from all anger, vindictiveness and hate, and, in his darkest hour, has held all men as his friends.

"If I have equal love in me," he cries, "for No-Changers, *Swarajists,* Liberals, Home Rulers, Independents, and for that matter Englishmen, I know that it is well for me and well also for the cause."

Thus has Gandhi succeeded—outwardly, in the face of enormous practical difficulties, as a statesman of the first rank; inwardly in the face of sore spiritual trial, as a saint of the noblest order. And he has done this—how? By unwavering fidelity to his ideal of non-resistance! In him do we witness the triumph of this gospel which we inherit from the Christ, and yet deride and flout. Gandhi proves what Paul proclaimed, that "love never faileth." When shall we, with our weapons of violence and our hands of blood, learn this truth thus taught us by a pagan?

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

# Gandhi the Realist

[The following is a statement in somewhat fuller detail of the events covered in the preceding article. It is written by a native Indian now in this country, an ardent follower of Gandhi, and author of "Gandhi the Apostle." The two articles, prepared independently of one another, the one by a westerner, the other by an easterner, present a remarkable confirmation of the true attitude to be taken toward recent events in India.—Editors.]

Gandhi the idealist, Gandhi the saint, Gandhi the apostle: such characterizations of the great leader have been very aptly and justly made. I have myself contributed my humble quota toward popularizing the concept of Gandhi the Apostle. Now it falls to my lot to write a critical history of Gandhi the Realist. As one views Gandhi with reference to his achievements, one is thoroughly astounded by the extreme wisdom and practicableness underlying his apparently unworkable methods and schemes for attaining a seemingly unattainable end. And here perhaps may be found a great principle emerging: namely, that idealism to be of the highest and most worth-while type must descend from the airy regions of metaphysics and come into living contact with the earthly regions of social relationships and behavior. In other words, true idealism is not divorced from human society: indeed, it is firmly founded upon the everyday behavior and relationship of man with his fellows. The functions of idealism then is ever to refine and spiritualize man's behavior and social relationships and to transfer his loyalties from lower to higher ideas, aspirations and ideals.

Gandhi is a rare personality because he combines a vision of transcendental idealism with a wealth of concrete achievements. Idealism and realism rarely go together: Gandhi is unique precisely because he is a "practical idealist." The practical idealist is a result of the interaction of the individual personality of a high order such as Gandhi's and social forces. When the personality controls the social forces, idealism is in the ascendancy; when the social forces are triumphant upon the personality, we have a sway of practicality. How does a practical idealist function in his social *milieu?* For the sake of clearness, let us answer this question more concretely by referring to Gandhi's career.

In the first place, Gandhi had to study pro and con, the total situation—political, economic, social, spiritual—in South Africa and weigh the merits and demerits of the existing situation. He became convinced that *it was a menace to the Indian community* and that it needed immediate drastic action. The objective was clearly defined: namely, winning back of political rights and status of equality to the Indian community in regard to immigration. The method or technique of attaining the end was the next consideration. His idealism forged the new weapon of passive resistance which Tolstoy called "the most essential work, the most important of all the work now being done in the world." Despite several reversals now and then, Mr. Gandhi remained master of the situation in South Africa, because his forceful and persuasive personality kept the small Indian community away from the path of violence and led them on to victory against a mighty system of imperialism. In the course of negotiations that took place from time to time during this twenty years' struggle, he made concessions to his opponents but no compromise in his objective or methods.

Let us now examine the situation in India—particularly after his release from prison in February, 1924 when the Labor government came into office in England. His launching of Passive Resistance against the Rowlatt Acts in February 1919 and suspension of the movement in April of the same year; his advocacy and preaching of non-violence to the country at large throughout the year 1919 and the first half of 1920 and then his promulgation of the famous Non-Co-operation program on the first of August; the ratification of this program by the Congress in September; the enthusiastic rally of the people under the flag of *Swaraj* for well-nigh two years; the wave of a new consciousness of their dignity, honor and respect for the Motherland that swept over the land; the successes attained by the non-co-operation movement until Gandhi's imprisonment in March 1922—these are all familiar facts.

Gandhi's imprisonment was celebrated not by any sensational *hartal* or general strike but by a national determination to carry forward the constructive program laid down at Bardoli just a few days before his arrest—the very thing which the leader had called upon his countrymen to do in order to prove their love of him and respect for his wishes. Confined within the prison walls, Gandhi's spirit was still animating the people's hearts and directing their destinies. A commission was soon appointed to tour the country and investigate whether conditions were ripe for launching the last item of the non-co-operation program, namely non-payment of taxes. The commission composed of leading Congressmen came to the conclusion that the country was not yet ready for the non-payment of taxes program. The Bardoli program laid down by Gandhi had taken the teeth out of the non-co-operation movement. At a time when people had been emotionally keyed up and wholeheartedly prepared to die for their liberty, Gandhi dampened their enthusiasm by calling off the "civil disobedience" part of his program and enjoined upon them the task of spinning and weaving and of cultivating the spirit of non-violence. At this psychological moment of disappointment, despair and spiritual set-back, was heralded the trumpet voice of *Swaraj* by Mr. C. R. Das, President-Elect for 1921 and President of the Congress of 1922, and Pundit Motilal Nehru, both of them lawyers of great eminence and patriots to the core. Mr. Das and Mr. Nehru, while reiterating their belief in non-violence and the constructive program of Bardoli, advocated entry into the reformed councils, Indian as well as Provincial, with a view to wrecking them. The disappointed masses, the non-plussed intelligentsia, and balked enthusiasts saw in this new program an opportunity for giving vent to their dissatisfaction. Loyalty to Gandhi and his principles of non-co-operation remained as strong as ever, but an entering wedge had been made. Non-co-operators became divided into two camps: the "No-Changers" under the leadership of Raghavachariar and others, and the *Swarajists* under the leadership of Nehru, Das and Hakim Ajmal Khan. The *Swarajists'* patriotism no one questioned: it was their opportunistic tactics so alien to the spirit of non-co-operation that were criticized by the "No-Changers." Still, the *Swarajists* managed to capture a number of Provincial Councils and followed the policy of thorough-going obstruction. This tactic served slightly to embarrass government officials; it did not, however, put the Government machinery out of gear because the

governments, both Indian and Provincial, have the right, under the present reform scheme, to ride roughshod over the wishes of the people's representatives. This obstruction, however, was a manifestation of India's discontent. So also was the non-co-operation constructive program. So also indeed was the heroic martyrdom of the Akalis in the Punjab.

During the two years of Gandhi's imprisonment, the country's morale had been strained almost to the breaking point. Promises of glorious national institutions of learning did not materialize, and disillusioned students returned to government schools and colleges. The country had no unified program of action: the "Liberals" bowed down before the government in abject humiliation; the *Swarajists* obstructed the government councils with little effect; and the "No-Changers" of the Non-Co-operation ranks would have nothing to do with government. Spinning and weaving were going on as before, but it is to be feared, with lukewarm earnestness. Government paid scant attention to people's appeals and Councils' Resolutions for the release of Gandhi. All was despair, disappointment, confusion. Thus in this period of storm and stress, the non-co-operation forces passed through a lull—the people's morale was at a low-ebb.

Such was the condition of political life in India when the Labor government came into office. This turn in British politics at once electrified the political atmosphere of India. But Mr. MacDonald's threatening speech directed against the Non-Co-operators convinced India that the regime of the British Labor Party, however beneficent it might prove to the British people themselves, would merely continue the policy of British imperialism so far as India was concerned. Soon the attention of the whole of India was concentrated upon stories of Gandhi's ill-health, secret operation by a government surgeon and removal from prison to hospital. All India prayed for the recovery of its beloved leader and saint. In two months, under the direction of an able English surgeon, Gandhi recovered and regained his health. As soon as he was able to write and talk, he spread the word throughout the country that he owed his life to a fine English surgeon. This bit of information had an instantaneous effect: those who had, contrary to the ethics of Non-Co-operation, transferred their hatred of the British system of government to the British agents of government, at once began to feel well-disposed toward all Britishers in India.

Their beloved leader in their midst, the people were now in an exultant and optimistic mood. Though not yet completely recovered, Gandhi soon took over the editorship of his papers *Young India* and *Nava Jivana* (New Life). In one of the April issues of *Young India*, Gandhi wrote as follows:

> I would still advocate the retention of the boycott to be worked out, not by propaganda for emptying government schools and courts (that was done and had to be done during 1920 and 1921), but by the constructive method of establishing and popularizing national schools and panchayets.

Before Gandhi lay a gigantic task—the task of uniting diverse groups and unifying diverse programs. Particularly inopportune and dangerous was the schism that existed between the "Non-Co-operators" and the *Swarajists;* both acknowledged allegiance to Congress and were agreed about the ultimate end as also about the methods in general but differed only in their approach to the methods in detail. The Congress Committee held extraordinary sessions at Delhi and later at Coconada; but at both these sessions, each party failed to convert whole-heartedly the other to its viewpoint. Gandhi refused to avail himself of the advantage a bare majority had given him. In the western world, a majority, however slight, would have imposed its opinions upon an almost equally strong minority. Gandhi, on the other hand, went to the length of "admitting defeat," and letting the *Swarajists* enter the Councils or Legislatures unconditionally. The tension was further abated when Gandhi expounded his position in May as follows:

> They (the *Swarajists*) are also justified in resorting to obstruction, because such was their policy and the Congress laid down no conditions as to their entry . . . I would, therefore, be no party to putting any obstacles in their way, or to carrying on any propaganda against the *Swarajists'* entry into the Legislatures, though I cannot actively help them in a project in which I do not believe.

The following suggestions which he offered were readily accepted by Das and Nehru:

> With regard to the method of the work in the Councils, I will say that I would enter a legislative body if only I could at all use it to advantage. If, therefore, I enter the Councils, I should without following a general policy of obstruction endeavor to give full strength to the Constructive Program of the Congress. I should, therefore, move resolutions requiring the Central and Provincial governments, as the case may be:
>
> (1) to make all their cloth purchases in handspun and handwoven *Khaddar;* (2) to impose prohibitive duty on foreign cloth; and (3) to abolish the drink and drug revenue and at least correspondingly reduce the army expenditure.
>
> If the government refuses to enforce such resolutions when carried in the Legislatures, I should invite it to dissolve them and take the vote of the electors on the specific point. If the government would not dissolve, I should resign my seat and prepare for civil disobedience. When that stage is reached, the *Swarajists* will find me ready to work with and under them. My test of fitness for civil disobedience remains the same as before.

To this statement of Mahatma Gandhi's Das and Nehru replied:

> We gratefully accept the suggestion made by Mahatma Gandhi in his statement and think that the resolutions mentioned by him in support of the constructive program of the Congress should certainly be accepted by the *Swaraj* Party.

Let us here briefly allude to a new current of thought that has been influencing the thinking of several leaders, notably Das and Nehru. In the Das-Nehru manifesto of May on the *Swarajists'* position in regard to Labor and Capital, we find the following significant passage:

> We must supplement the work of the Congress by helping labor and peasant organizations throughout the country. The problem of labor is always a difficult problem to solve in every country, but in India the difficulties are greater. On the one hand, we must find out a way of organization by which we can prevent the exploitation of labor by capitalists or landlords, but on the other hand, we must be on our guard to see that these very organizations may not themselves be the source of oppression by nursing extravagant and unreasonable demands. Labor undoubtedly requires protection, but so do enterprises. Our organizations must protect both from exploitation, and the Trade Union Congress must be so organized as to be able to serve this useful purpose. We hold that in the long run the real interests of both and the country at large are identical.

This is by no means socialism: indeed there is too much bourgeois ideology; but a jump from this to the socialist theory of production for service rather than profit will not be a difficult one when the time arrives.

On the 28th and 29th of June, the All-India Congress Committee met together in Ahmedabad to evolve a unified program for the country at large. On the first day the *Swarajists* led by Nehru and Das left the meeting on the ground of alleged unconstitutionality involved in Gandhi's "spinning" resolution; but the next day they

returned and the constructive program of Congress, particularly the encouragement of spinning and weaving, was reaffirmed.

The three months of July, August and September were marked by negotiations between the *Swarajists* and Gandhi. But this period is more noteworthy for the heavy fines imposed upon leading nationalist papers and editors, for the wholesale arrest of Akali Jathas, and for the outbreak of violent communal feuds between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. Gandhi's patience was taxed to the limit and after the Hindu-Muslim outbreak in Kohat he declared on the 17th of September a twenty-one days' fast in repentance for his own sins and those of his countrymen. On the 20th of September the Unity Conference was held in Delhi to settle the disputes between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. All India looked with expectancy to Delhi and Gandhi consented to preside over the deliberations of the Conference. But being too weak to participate in the conference work, and being firmly resolved not to give up his fast, Gandhi allowed himself to be removed at the doctors' request from the city to a bungalow outside the city limits. Here he remained, spinning at the wheel usually longer than half an hour a day, fasting, living on fresh air and water, getting reports of the Unity Conference, writing messages: a life full of quiet meditation and bustling activity, of physical infirmity and spiritual strength. The efforts of the promoters of the Unity Conference were crowned with success. A terrific, self-imposed ordeal Gandhi went through, indeed at times hovering between life and death! But since Hindu-Muslim unity is a cardinal principle of his political creed, Gandhi would cheerfully give up his life to attain that end.

Weak and infirm as he was physically, Gandhi still found time to travel up and down the country, to preside at important political meetings and functions and still retained his strength of making speeches and writing articles. In his memorable article in *Young India* of the third week of October, Gandhi plead for a suspension of non-co-operation. "We must stoop to conquer," he wrote. If the country at large had failed to understand the message of non-violent non-co-operation, it was his duty as a Satyāgrahi to practise it personally but not to impose it upon others. The one purpose of non-co-operation was to bring about national unity; if the program had, contrary to the wishes and expectations of its promulgator, succeeded in creating dissensions and feuds, it was highly imperative that it be suspended. "My own views," he writes, "remain unchanged. I swear by non-violent non-co-operation and all the boycotts that follow from it." His advice to the "No-Changers" is:

> Retaining every bit of "Non-Co-operation" in our own persons, we must make the path of those who do not believe in it smooth for helping us and helping the country in the constructive effort . . . The "No-Changers'" duty, if they are worth anything, is self-effacement, silent work. They must not fight for power or office or name: they must work silently, result or no result.

This "surrendering to the utmost of my capacity to the *Swarajists* as well as the Liberals," is a true test of the ethics of Satyāgraha.

> I must prove to everyone that I am what I profess to be—their friend and servant. My creed is service of God and therefore of Humanity. I can serve neither God nor Humanity if as an Indian I do not serve India and as a Hindu I do not serve the Indian Mussalmans. Voluntary service means pure love. I must strive my utmost during the coming year of grace to express in every little act of mine whatever love I am capable of.

What has been the government's attitude during this period? Was it rejoiced at the reconciliation that Gandhi was about to effect? Indeed not. It foresaw, on the contrary, that the moment the two groups within the Congress got together and resolved their differences, it would find itself in rather deep waters. Hence, to avert such a possibility, it embarked upon a policy of repression. Lord Lytton, Governor of Bengal, visited Viscount Reading at Simla some time ago. His visit resulted in the Governor-General's promulgation on the 25th of October of the Bengal Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 1924. Accordingly, (a) all "magistrates of first class" and (b) all "police officers above the rank of sub-inspector" were authorized "ex-officio to arrest without warrant any person against whom a reasonable suspicion exists." This pernicious measure alleged to have been dictated by a supposed emergency, was applied to the whole of Bengal, the intellectual centre not only of India but of the entire continent of Asia. A new revision of the Rowlatt Acts, this ordinance was at first confined to Bengal only, one presumes as a test case: should its operation prove successful there in eradicating all national yearning for freedom and liberty, a nation-wide repressive measure would be enacted, so that people may live in a continual state of martial law. The alleged reason given by Viscount Reading for promulgating this extraordinary ordinance was to stamp out "revolutionary conspiracy" so-called: its real object was to strangle constitutional agitation and obstruction by the *Swarajists*. The ordinance immediately ushered in a reign of terror all over Bengal: Congress offices were raided by day and at night; leaders believing in non-violent non-co-operation were arrested and incarcerated without trial; the *Swaraj* Party's offices were also raided; *Swarajist* leaders believing in non-violent obstruction of government were summarily arrested and imprisoned; private homes were broken in and raided; all the tortures of martial law were soon visited upon the whole of Bengal.

The leaders saw through the evil designs underlying this emergency ordinance: their reply to government repression was unity among themselves. Early in November Gandhi signed the "Calcutta Pact" with *Swarajist* leaders, whereby he (1) advised suspension of non-co-operation; (2) agreed to retention of the *Swaraj* Party as an "integral part of the Congress organization," even if it (the *Swaraj* Party) should enter provincial and central legislatures; (3) got the *Swarajists* to agree to a program of intensive spinning by calling upon all members and leaders of the Congress to spin on pain of expulsion.

No one will have any difficulty in realizng at once that the first and the third articles of this Pact are entirely in consonance with the ethics of non-co-operation and Gandhi's principles. Suspension of the program is but part of the discipline of non-violence, Gandhi has had occasions in the past when he suspended one particular movement and initiated another, suspended this one and launched a still new one, non-violence being the backbone and non-co-operation the framework of them all. Suspension therefore cannot be argued into a betrayal of inconsistency on the part of the leader. It is the second item, however, which is likely to tax the patience and dampen the ardor of Gandhi's admirers on the score of inconsistency and compromise.

I hold no particular brief for or against Gandhi: I have enjoined upon myself the task of recording, not of advocating. Besides, Gandhi's deeds embody his

philosophy more vividly and forcefully than any defense of his actions could ever explain it. Therefore, without attempting to advocate or defend, I shall merely strive to put forth the social-psychological background, leading up to Gandhi's blessing the efforts of the *Swarajists* in regard to council-entry in which he himself does not believe. The question is: Does this act of Gandhi's involve a compromise on his part? I have read reports of all-knowing "star" reporters and news writers, manufactured in the U. S. A., describing Gandhi as an opportunist like Lloyd George and a charlatan. It requires, however, only a slight measure of intelligence to lead one to the conclusion that Gandhi's action involves no compromise whatsoever: this slight measure of intelligence is sadly lacking in the "all-knowing 'star' reporters and news writers manufactured in the U. S. A." What is the rationale of Gandhi's joining hands with the *Swarajists* on a seemingly compromising basis? It is very simple. He himself does not believe in council-entry advocated by the *Swarajists* and would never take part in the present councils himself; nor would he advocate participation into legislatures with a view to obstruction. But he has joined hands with the *Swarajists,* one hears a critic argue, and has thereby actively and passively blessed their efforts, however much he may claim to dissociate himself from their activities and program: does this not involve a compromise? Under ordinary circumstances it would; but under the abnormal conditions ushered in by the Bengal ordinance, it is not a compromise. For, in the first place, Gandhi is not oblivious of the fact that the right of constitutional agitation, the right to organize peacefully, and the right to civil as opposed to martial government, are among the most fundamental principles of social and political life of any group. And secondly, if the government threatens these fundamental rights, it is his duty first to regain those rights to himself and to the country at large, and then to pursue his own program after the crisis has been tided over. Gandhi personally does not believe in council-entry but he does believe in the right of those who believe in it to say so and to do so. Therefore, he, a non-co-operator, at once suspends his movement and champions the cause of the *Swarajists,* in order to reassert the right of constitutional agitation. To wise statesmanship is left no other alternative than the course of action adopted by the Mahatma. Gandhi, therefore, cannot be accused of inconsistency on the alleged ground of believing in non-entry into councils and advocating entry into them. Indeed, I commend this act of the Mahatma's as a great stroke of statesmanship and a striking expression of the highest type of idealism. A single-track mind would have ignored the social realities; not so Gandhi. This "Calcutta Pact" redounds to the credit of both parties and their leaders, and particularly to Mahatma Gandhi. There is no compromise involved. Nor is there the slightest talk of intellectual capitulation; nor indeed of spiritual capitulation on Gandhi's part. Some time ago I had described Gandhi as the "risen Lord and Savior of the destinies of India." I see no reason for revising this characterization.

November, 1924, will go down in history as a very important landmark in the history of Indian nationalism. For, it was in this month that with considerable success was made the first definite attempt of the post-war period at uniting the different political parties of the country. . . . First, the All-India Congress Committee, which held its session earlier during the day prior to the All-Party Conference, ratified the Calcutta Pact signed between Gandhi on the one hand and Das and Nehru on the other. The Mahatma, while moving the Resolution urging upon the Committee to ratify the Pact, feelingly advised the stanch "No-Changers": "Spin, spin, spin twenty-four hours and demonstrate to *Swarajists* the potency of spinning-wheel." He concluded his speech by saying:

> I am not a lunatic: I am a reasonable man. I am losing ground gradually. Now I have no hesitation in bending before *Swarajists* and Liberals, and if it is necessary I shall bend before Englishmen also if only they show a change of heart.

It was in the course of this speech, too, that alluding to Congress franchise Gandhi enunciated the great principle of *"No Work, No Vote."*

At the All-Party Conference Gandhi's practical statesmanship and the cordial response of the various leaders of different shades of opinion paved the way for Unity in Congress. It was a sight for the gods to see when the "Liberals" and the "Non-Co-operators" met together under the same roof. This Conference presented a united front against the ordinance which is hotly resented by the entire country. The two resolutions passed by it may be summarized as follows:

> (1) This Conference while condemning anarchical organizations views with the strongest disapproval and condemns the action of the Governor-General in promulgating the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance; urges the withdrawal of the Ordinance and records its conviction that the present political situation in India is due to denial of just rights long overdue, and that establishment of *Swaraj* is the only remedy.
>
> (2) The Conference appoints a representative committee consisting of members of all parties, to consider the best way of reuniting all political parties in the Congress and to prepare a scheme of *Swaraj* including the solution of Hindu-Muslim and like questions in their political aspect and to report not later than the 31st of March, 1925; the Conference to meet not later than the 30th of April.

On the 7th of December, three weeks before the thirty-ninth session of Congress at Belgaum, Gandhi presided over the deliberations of the Punjab Political Provincial Conference, where he laid stress on Hindu-Muslim unity, on the use of the *Charkā* (the spinning-wheel), and on the removal of untouchability. He was then deeply thinking, he said, of a new plan according to which they would be called upon either to attain *Swaraj* or lay down their lives. "There will be no middle course of courting imprisonment or going to jails." As soon as this plan was matured, he would announce it to his countrymen. A very significant statement this! Concluding he said:

> I do not like the cries of "Mahatma Gandhi-ki-Jai" ("Victory to Mahatma Gandhi"). I would advise you to act upon the methods and principles which I have formulated and ask you to carry them out. I do not feel proud when you shout my name without following my advice. Please remember my words and work for the freedom of the country.

On the previous day, that is on the 6th, Gandhi had addressed in Lahore the graduates of the Punjab National College, emphasizing the importance of the spinning-wheel. He did not grudge the intellectuals their Shakespeare or Milton, their Koran or the Bhagavad-Gita, but he could not make out how they could call themselves Indians and yet have no thought for the starving millions in the country. It has been proposed to suspend Non-Co-operation: yes—but, said the Mahatma, "So long as I think that the present system of government is satanic, so long will I continue to non-co-operate even though I be absolutely alone. . . . I have absolutely no quarrel with Lord Reading or Sir Malcolm Hailey as such": his quarrel is with the "satanic" government which they represent. But Non-

Co-operation as a national program had to be abandoned, because the people were non-co-operating among themselves by carrying on the propaganda of hatred and violence against one another. That sort of Non-Co-operation, said Gandhi, could not be allowed to go on. When he himself consented to preside at the 39th session of the Congress in Belgaum, he did not pretend that he was thereby going to do any great service to the country; but he persuaded himself that he should do what was the last public act that it was left to him to render—last, because India had not wholeheartedly carried out his program.

The Belgaum Congress, Gandhi to preside! His last public act of self-surrender, his thoughts of a new plan for the attainment of *Swaraj*—or wholesale self-sacrifice! There are, to be sure, contradictions enough in these pronouncements. But they show clearly how Gandhi's soul has been aglow with burning patriotism during this crucial period. The historic 39th Session of the Congress was held at Belgaum, an historic place in the Deccan, during the Christmas week of 1924, to be more precise from the 26th to the 29th of December. The previous action of the Committee was ratified, and the new policy adopted.

* * * *

What is the future? So far as India is concerned, "non-violent non-co-operation as a means of attaining political freedom has come to stay." The program may be suspended, but its ethics once sown take deep roots into the soil. But for this program the post-war ferment would have rent India asunder. It has cemented Hindu-Muslim unity; it has been the bearer of new hopes to the "untouchables" and has thus redeemed the fate of one-fifth of Indian humanity. It has given a new dignity to the silent work of Indian womanhood and has provided an opportunity for developing women's latent powers by extending their scope of activity in the public life of the country. It has recognized the just claims of labor whose worth has been all too often under-rated. Underlying the program is to be seen a current of thought visualizing the new world order. Non-violent Non-Co-operation as a method of settling international disputes is India's contribution to political science. The people of India watched with great eagerness the program of passive resistance adopted by the German people during the French occupation of the Ruhr; indeed, it is their claim that this political weapon of economic boycott and non-co-operation is capable of universal application. And Gandhi says that it does good to those who use it and to those against whom it is used.

By some singular correlationship which I cannot account for in scientific terms, Gandhi's spiritual insight always coincides with wise statesmanship and the most scrupulous regard for realism. All of his acts are done before the public gaze, yet he remains a puzzle and a mystery. But mystery or no mystery, Gandhi is a powerful spiritual dynamite in whose presence evil can no longer exist; or, to put it differently, Gandhi is a prolific spiritual fertilizer in whose presence the good and the beautiful and the true attain to their highest glory and grow to perfection.

*Chicago, Illinois.* HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR.

# Presidential Address

**By *M. K. Gandhi,* at the 39th Indian National Congress, Belgaum**

Friends:

It was after much misgiving that I accepted the burden of the honor you have done me today. The unique honor for this year should have been bestowed upon Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, who did such wonderful work both in Kenya and South Africa. But it was not to be. The developments both internal and external have necessitated my acceptance of the burden. I know that I shall have your support in my attempt to do justice to the high office to which you have called me. . . .

### RETROSPECTIVE

From the September of 1920 the Congress has been principally an institution for developing strength from within. It has ceased to function by means of resolutions addressed to the Government for redress of grievances. It did so, because it ceased to believe in the beneficial character of the existing system of government. The breach of faith with the Musalmans of India was the first rude shock to the people's faith in the Government. The Rowlatt Act and O'Dwyerism culminating in the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, opened the eyes of the people to the true nature of the system. At the same time it was realized that the existence of the system depended upon the co-operation whether conscious or unconscious, and whether voluntary or forced, of the people. With the view therefore of mending or ending the system it was decided to try to begin withdrawing voluntary co-operation from the top. At the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta in 1920 the boycott of Government titles, law-courts, educational institutions, legislative bodies and foreign cloth was resolved upon. All the boycotts were more or less taken up by the parties concerned. Those who could not or would not, retired from the Congress. I do not propose to trace the chequered career of the non-co-operation movement. Though not a single boycott was anywhere near completion, every one of them had undoubtedly the effect of diminishing the prestige of the particular institution boycotted.

The most important boycott was the boycott of violence. While it appeared at one time to be entirely successful, it was soon discovered that the non-violence was only skin-deep. It was the passive non-violence of helplessness, not the enlightened non-violence of resourcefulness. The result was an eruption of intolerance against those who did not non-co-operate. This was violence of a subtler type. In spite, however, of this grave defect I make bold to say that the propaganda of non-violence checked the outbreak of physical violence which would certainly have broken out, had not non-violent non-co-operation come into being. It is my deliberate conviction that non-violent non-co-operation has given to the people a consciousness of their strength. It has brought to the surface the hidden powers in the people of resistance through suffering. It has caused an awakening among the masses which perhaps no other method could have.

Though, therefore, non-violent non-co-operation has not brought us *Swaraj,* though it has brought about

certain deplorable results and though the institutions that were sought to be boycotted are still flourishing, in my humble opinion, non-violent non-co-operation as a means of attaining political freedom has come to stay and that even its partial success has brought us nearer *Swaraj*. There is no mistaking the fact that the capacity for suffering for the sake of a cause must advance it.

### A Halt

But we are face to face with a situation that compels us to cry halt. For while individuals hold firmly to their belief in non-co-operation, the majority of those who are immediately concerned have practically lost faith in it, with the exception of boycott of foreign cloth. Scores of lawyers have resumed practice. Some even regret having ever given it up. Many who had given up Councils have returned to them and the number of those who believe in Council entry is on the increase. Hundreds of boys and girls who gave up Government schools and colleges have repented of their action and have returned to them. I hear that Government schools and colleges can hardly cope with the demand for admission. In these circumstances these boycotts cannot be worked as part of the National program, unless the Congress is prepared to do without the classes directly affected. But I hold it to be just as impracticable to keep these classes out of the Congress as it would be now to keep the non-co-operators out. They must both remain in the Congress, without either party interfering with or hostilely criticizing the other. What is applicable to Hindu-Muslim unity is, I feel, applicable to the unity among different political groups. We must tolerate each other and trust to time to convert the one or the other to the opposite belief. We must go further. We must plead with the Liberals and others who have seceded to rejoin the Congress. If non-co-operation is suspended, there is no reason why they should keep out. The advance must be from us Congressmen. We must cordially invite them and make it easy for them to come in.

You are perhaps now able to see why I entered into the agreement with the *Swarajis*.

### Foreign Cloth Boycott

You will observe that one boycott has been retained. Out of regard for the sentiment of an English friend the word "boycott" has been changed in the agreement into "refusal to use foreign cloth." There is no doubt a bad odor about the word "boycott." It usually implies hatred. So far as I am concerned, I have not intended the word to bear any such meaning. The boycott has reference not to British but to foreign cloth. That boycott is not merely a right but a duty. It is as much a duty as boycott of foreign waters would be if they were imported to substitute the waters of the Indian rivers. This, however, is a digression.

What I wanted to say was that the agreement saves and emphasizes the boycott of foreign cloth. For me it is an effective substitute for violent methods. Just as certain acts such as personal abuse, irritating conduct, lying, causing hurt and murder are symbols of violence, similarly courtesy, inoffensive conduct, truthfulness, etc., are symbols of non-violence. And so to me is boycott of foreign cloth a symbol of non-violence. Revolutionary crime is intended to exert pressure. But it is the insane pressure of anger and ill-will. I contend that non-violent acts exert pressure far more effective than violent acts, for that pressure comes from goodwill and gentleness. Boycott of foreign cloth exerts such pressure. We import the largest amount of foreign cloth from Lancashire. It is also by far the largest of all our imports, sugar being next. Britain's chief interest centers round the Lancashire trade with India. It is the one thing more than any other that has ruined the Indian peasant and imposed partial idleness upon him by depriving him of the one supplementary occupation he had. Boycott of foreign cloth is therefore a necessity if he is to live. The plan, therefore, is not merely to induce the peasant to refuse to buy the cheap and nice-looking foreign fabric but also by teaching him to utilize his spare hours in carding and spinning cotton and getting it woven by the village weavers to dress himself in *khaddar* so woven and thus to save him the cost of buying foreign and for that matter even Indian mill-made cloth. Thus boycott of foreign cloth by means of hand-spinning and hand-weaving, i.e., *khaddar,* not only saves the peasant's money, but it enables us workers to render social service of a first class order. It brings us into direct touch with the villagers. It enables us to give them real political education and teach them to become self-sustained and self-reliant. Organization of *khaddar* is thus infinitely better than co-operative societies or any other form of village organization. It is fraught with the highest political consequence, because it removes the greatest immoral temptation from Britain's way. I call the Lancashire trade immoral, because it was raised and is sustained on the ruin of millions of India's peasants. And as one immorality leads to another, the many proved immoral acts of Britain are traceable to this one immoral traffic. If, therefore, this one great temptation is removed from Britain's path by India's voluntary effort, it would be good for India, good for Britain and, as Britain is today the predominant world-power, good even for humanity.

I do not endorse the proposition that supply follows demand. On the contrary, demand is often artificially created by unscrupulous vendors. And if a nation is bound, as I hold it is, like individuals to comply with a code of moral conduct, then it must consider the welfare of those whose wants it seeks to supply. It is wrong and immoral for a nation to supply, for instance, intoxicating liquor to those who are addicted to drink. What is true of intoxicants is true of grain or cloth, if the discontinuance of their cultivation or manufacture in the country to which foreign grain or cloth are exported results in enforced idleness or penury. These latter hurt a man's soul and body just as much as intoxication. Depression is but excitement upside down and hence equally disastrous in its results and often more so because we have not yet learned to regard as immoral or sinful the depression of idleness or penury.

### Britain's Duty

It is then, I hold, the duty of Great Britain to regulate her exports with due regard to the welfare of India, as it is India's to regulate her imports with due regard to her own welfare. That economics is untrue which ignores or diregards moral values. The extension of the law of non-violence in the domain of economics means nothing less than the introduction of moral values as a factor to be considered in regulating international commerce. And I must confess that my ambition is nothing less than to see international relations placed on a moral basis through India's efforts. I do not despair of cultivation of limited mass non-

violence. I refuse to believe that the tendency of human nature is always downward.

The fruition of the boycott of foreign cloth through hand-spinning and *khaddar* is calculated not only to bring about a political result of the first magnitude, it is calculated also to make the poorest of India, whether men or women, conscious of their strength and make them partakers in the struggle for India's freedom.

### Foreign *versus* British

It is hardly necessary now to demonstrate the futility, not to say the violent nature, of boycott of British cloth or better still British goods as so many patriots have suggested. I am considering the boycott purely from the point of view of India's good. All British goods do not harm us. Some goods, such as English books, we need for our intellectual or spiritual benefit. As regards cloth, it is not merely British cloth that harms us, but all foreign cloth, and for that matter to a lesser extent even mill-made cloth injures us. Boycott brought about anyhow of British cloth cannot yield the same results as such boycott brought about by hand-spinning and *khaddar*. This necessitates exclusion at least of all foreign cloth. The exclusion is not intended as a punishment. It is a necessity of national existence.

### Objections Considered

But, say the critics, the spinning wheel has not taken, it is not exciting enough, it is an occupation only for women, it means a return to the middle ages, it is a vain effort against the majestic march of scientific knowledge for which machinery stands. In my humble opinion India's need is not excitement but solid work. For the millions solid work itself is excitement and tonic at the same time. The fact is that we have not given the spinning wheel enough trial. I am sorry to have to say that many of us have not given it a serious thought. Even the members of the All-India Congress Committee have failed to carry out the series of resolutions on hand-spinning which they themselves have passed from time to time. The majority of us have simply not believed in it. In the circumstances, it is hardly just to say that spinning has failed for want of excitement about it. To say that it is merely an old woman's occupation is to ignore facts. Spinning mills are a multiplication of spinning wheels. They are managed by men. It is time that we got out of this superstition that some occupations are beneath the dignity of men. Under normal conditions no doubt spinning will be the occupation of the gentle sex. But the State of the future will always have to keep some men at the spinning wheel so as to make improvements in it within the limitations which as a cottage industry it must have. I must inform you that the progress the mechanism of the wheel has made would have been impossible, if some of us men had not worked at it and had not thought about it day and night.

### Machinery

I wish, too, you would dismiss from your minds the views attributed to me about machinery. In the first instance, I am no more trying to present for national acceptance all my views on machinery, than I am presenting the whole of my belief in non-violence. The spinning wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery. My head daily bows in reverence to its unknown inventor. What I do resent is the wanton and wicked destruction of the one cottage industry of India that kept the wolf from the doors of thousands of homes scattered over a surface 1900 miles long and 1500 miles broad.

### Spinning Franchise

You will not now wonder at my passion for the spinning wheel, nor will you wonder why I have ventured to present it for introduction in the franchise, and why Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu Das have accepted it on behalf of the *Swaraj* party. If I had my way, there would be no one on the Congress register who is unwilling to spin or who would not wear *khaddar* on all occasions. I am, however, thankful for what the *Swaraj* party has accepted. The modification is a concession to weakness or want of faith. But it must serve as a spur to greater effort on the part of those who have full faith in the wheel and *khaddar*.

### No Other Message

I have thus dilated upon the spinning wheel because I have no better or other message for the nation. I know no other effective method for the attainment of *Swaraj* if it is to be by "peaceful and legitimate means." As I have already remarked it is the only substitute for violence that can be accepted by the whole nation. I swear by Civil Disobedience. But Civil Disobedience for the attainment of *Swaraj* is an impossibility unless and until we have attained the power of achieving boycott of foreign cloth. You will now easily perceive why I would be a useless guide for the Congress if my views about the spinning wheel were not acceptable to you. Indeed you would be justified in regarding me, as some friends do, as a hindrance to national progress, if you consider me to be wrong in my exposition of the doctrine underlying the spinning wheel. If it does not appeal to your heads as well as your hearts, you will be wanting in your duty in not rejecting my lead. Let it no longer be said, as Lord Willingdon very properly once said of us, that we had not the strength and courage to say "No." Indeed your rejection of my proposal, if you do not believe in it, will be a step towards *Swaraj*.

### Hindu-Muslim Unity

Hindu-Muslim unity is not less important than the spinning wheel. It is the breath of our life. I do not need to occupy much of your time on this question, because the necessity of it for *Swaraj* is almost universally accepted. I say "almost" because I know some Hindus and some Musalmans who prefer the present condition of dependence on Great Britain if they cannot have either wholly Hindu or wholly Musalman India. Happily their number is small.

I share Maulana Shaukat Ali's robust optimism that the present tension is a mere temporary distemper. The Khilafat agitation in which Hindus made common cause with their Musalman brethren and the non-co-operation that followed it caused an awakening among the hitherto slumbering masses. It has given a new consciousness to the classes as well as the masses. Interested persons who were disappointed during the palmy days of non-co-operation, now that it has lost the charm of novelty, have found their opportunity and are trading upon the religious bigotry or the selfishness of both the communities. The result is written in the history of the feuds of the past two years. Religion has been travestied. Trifles have been dignified by the name of religious tenets which, the fanatics claim, must be observed at any cost. Economic and political causes have been brought into play for the sake of fomenting trouble. The culminating point

was reached in Kohat. The tragedy was aggravated by the callous indifference of the local authority. I must not tarry to examine the causes or to distribute the blame. I have not the material for the task even if I was minded for it. Suffice it to say that the Hindu refugees fled for fear of their lives. There is in Kohat an overwhelming Musalman majority. They have in so far as is possible under a foreign domination effective political control. It is up to them, therefore, to show that the Hindus are as safe in the midst of their majority, as they would be if the whole population of Kohat was Hindu. The Musalmans of Kohat may not rest satisfied till they have brought back to Kohat every one of the refugees. I hope that the Hindus will not fall into the trap laid for them by the Government and will resolutely decline to go back till the Musalmans of Kohat have given them full assurance as to their lives and property.

The Hindus can live in the midst of an overwhelming Musalman majority only if the latter are willing to receive and treat them as friends and equals, just as Musalmans, if in a minority, must depend for honorable existence in the midst of a Hindu majority on the latter's friendliness. A Government can give protection against thieves and robbers, but not even a *Swaraj* Government will be able to protect people against a wholesale boycott by one community of another. Governments can deal with abnormal situations. When quarrels become a normal thing of life, it is called civil war and parties must fight it out themselves. The present Government being foreign, in reality a veiled military rule, has resources at its command for its protection against any combination we can make and has, therefore, the power, if it has the will, to deal with our class feuds. But no *Swaraj* Government with any pretension to being a popular Government can possibly be organized and maintained on a war footing. A *Swaraj* Government means a Government established by the free joint will of Hindus, Musalmans and others. Hindus and Musalmans, if they desire *Swaraj,* have perforce to settle their differences amicably.

The Unity Conference at Delhi has paved the way for a settlement of religious differences. The Committee of the All Parties' Conference is among other things expected to find a workable and just solution of the political differences not only between Hindus and Musalmans but between all classes and all castes, sects or denominations. Our goal must be removal, at the earliest possible moment, of communal or sectional representation. A common electorate must impartially elect its representatives on the sole ground of merit. Our services must be likewise impartially manned by the best qualified men and women. But till that time comes and communal jealousies or preferences become a thing of the past, minorities who suspect the motives of majorities must be allowed their way. The majorities must set the example of self-sacrifice.

### Untouchability

Untouchability is another hindrance to *Swaraj*. Its removal is just as essential for *Swaraj* as the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity. This is an essential Hindu question and Hindus cannot claim or take *Swaraj* till they have restored the liberty of the suppressed classes. They have sunk with the latter's suppression. Historians tell us that the Aryan invaders treated the original inhabitants of Hindustan precisely as the English invaders treat us, if not much worse. If so, our helotry is a just retribution for our having created an untouchable class. The sooner we remove the blot, the better it is for us Hindus. But the priests tell us that untouchability is a divine appointment. I claim to know something of Hinduism. I am certain that the priests are wrong. It is a blasphemy to say that God set apart any portion of humanity as untouchable. And Hindus who are Congressmen have to see to it that they break down the barrier at the earliest possible moment. The *Vaikom Satyagrahis* are showing us the way. They are carrying on their battle with gentleness and firmness. They have patience, courage and faith. Any movement in which these qualities are exhibited becomes irresistible.

I would however warn the Hindu brethren against the tendency which one sees nowadays of exploiting the suppressed classes for a political end. To remove untouchability is a penance that caste Hindus owe to Hinduism and to themselves. The purification required is not of untouchables but of the so-called superior castes. There is no vice that is special to the untouchables, not even dirt and insanitaton. It is our arrogance which blinds us "superior" Hindus to our own blemishes and which magnifies those of our downtrodden brethren whom we have suppressed and whom we keep under suppression. Religions like nations are being weighed in the balance. God's grace and revelation are the monopoly of no race or nation. They descend equally upon all who wait upon God. That religion and that nation will be blotted out of the face of the earth which pins its faith to injustice, untruth or violence. God is Light, not darkness. God is Love, not hate. God is Truth, not untruth. God alone is Great. We, His creatures, are but dust. Let us be humble and recognize the place of the lowliest of His creatures. Krishna honored Sudama in his rags as he honored no one else. Love is the root of religion or sacrifice and this perishable body is the root of self or irreligion, says Tulsidas. Whether we win *Swaraj* or not, the Hindus have to purify themselves before they can hope to revive the Vedic philosophy and make it a living reality.

### Swaraj Scheme

But the spinning wheel, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability are only means to an end. The end we do not know. For me it is enough to know the means. Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life. But I have long professed my conversion to the view pressed upon the public by Babu Bhagvan Das, that the public must know the end, not vaguely but precisely. They must know the full definition of *Swaraj,* i.e., the scheme of *Swaraj* which all India wants and must fight for. Happily the Committee appointed by the All Parties' Conference is charged with that mission and let us hope that the Committee will be able to produce a scheme that will be acceptable to all parties. May I suggest for its consideration the following points?

1. The qualification for the franchise should be neither property nor position but manual work, such for example as suggested for the Congress franchise. Literary or property test has proved to be elusive. Manual work gives an opportunity to all who wish to take part in the government and the well-being of the State.

2. The ruinous military expenditure should be curtailed to the proportion necessary for protection of life and property in normal times.

3. Administration of justice should be cheapened

and with that end in view the final court of appeal should be not in London but in Delhi. Parties to civil suits must be compelled in the majority of cases to refer their disputes to arbitration, the decisions of these *Panchayats* to be final except in cases of corruption or obvious misapplication of law. Multiplicity of intermediate courts should be avoided. Case law should be abolished and the general procedure should be simplified. We have slavishly followed the cumbrous and worn out English procedure. The tendency in the Colonies is to simplify the procedure so as to make it easy for litigants to plead their own cases.

4. Revenues from intoxicating liquors and drugs should be abolished.

5. Salaries of the Civil and Military Service should be brought down to a level compatible with the general condition of the country.

6. There should be re-distribution of provinces on a linguistic basis with as complete autonomy as possible for every province for its internal administration and growth.

7. Appointment of a commission to examine all the monopolies given to foreigners and, subject to the findings of the commission, full guarantees to be given for all vested rights justly acquired.

8. Full guarantee of their status to the Indian Chiefs without any hindrance from the Central Government subject to the right of asylum to subjects of these States who, not being offenders against the Penal Code, may seek it in Self-governing India.

9. Repeal of all arbitrary powers.

10. The highest post to be open to all who may be otherwise fit. Examinations for the Civil and Military Services to be in India.

11. Recognition of complete religious freedom to various denominations subject to mutual forbearance.

12. The official language for provincial governments, legislatures and courts, within a definite period, to be the vernacular of the province; of the Privy Council, the final court of appeal, to be Hindustani; the script to be either Devanagari or Persian. The language of the Central Government and of the Central Legislature to be also Hindustani. The language of inter-national diplomacy to be English.

I trust you will not laugh at what may appear to you to be extravagance of thought in the foregoing sketch of some of the requirements of *Swaraj* as I would have it. We may not have the power today to take or receive or do the things I have mentioned. Have we the will? Let us at least cultivate the desire. Before I leave this highly attractive, because speculative, theme let me assure the Committee in charge of the drafting of a *Swaraj* scheme, that I claim for my suggestion no more attention than it would give to any single individual's. I have incorporated them in my address only to gain greater currency for them than they would perhaps otherwise receive.

### Independence

The above sketch presupposes the retention of the British connection on perfectly honorable and absolutely equal terms. But I know that there is a section among Congressmen who want under every conceivable circumstance complete independence of Britain. They will not have even an equal partnership. In my opinion if the British Government mean what they say and honestly help us to equality, it would be a greater triumph than a complete severance of the British connection. I would therefore strive for *Swaraj* within the Empire, but would not hesitate to sever all connection, if severance became a necessity through Britain's own fault. I would thus throw the burden of separation on the British people. The better mind of the world desires today not absolutely independent States warring one against another but a federation of friendly interdependent States. The consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal interdependence rather than independence. It should rest with Britain to say that she will have no real alliance with India. I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting the independence. Any scheme that I would frame, while Britain declares her goal about India to be complete equality within the Empire, would be that of alliance and not of independence without alliance. I would urge every Congressman not to be insistent on independence in each and every case, not because there is anything impossible about it, but because it is wholly unnecessary till it has become perfectly manifest that Britain really means subjugation in spite of her declaration to the contrary.

### The Swaraj Party

So far, then, I have considered the contents of the agreement and the general questions arising from it. Not much need be said about the status of equality given to the *Swaraj* party. I wish I could have avoided it, not because the party is not worthy, but because I do not share its views about Council entry. But if I must remain in the Congress and even lead it, I must recognize facts as they are. It was easy enough for me to go out of the Congress or to decline the honor of presiding. But it was not, so I thought and still think, in the interest of the country for me to take that step. The *Swaraj* party represents, if not a majority, at least a strong and growing minority in the Congress. If I was not to divide the Congress on the issue of its status, I was bound to agree to its conditions so long as they were not in conflict with my conscience. They are not in my opinion unreasonable. The *Swarajists* want to use the name of the Congress for their policy. A formula had to be found for their doing so without their pledging or binding the No-changers to their policy. One of the ways of doing it was to give it the authority and the responsibility both financial and executive with regard to the framing and the prosecution of their policy. The Congress as a whole could not guide that policy without sharing the responsibility. And as I could not take the responsibility, and as I apprehend no No-changer can, I could not be party to shaping the policy, nor could I shape it without my heart in it. And heart can only go where belief is. I know that the sole authority to the *Swaraj* party to use the name of the Congress in regard to the Council program makes somewhat awkward the position of the other parties wishing to join the Congress. But I fear it is inevitable. The *Swaraj* party can not be expected to surrender the advantage it possesses. After all it wants the advantage not for itself but for the service of the country. All parties have or can have that ambition or no other. I hope therefore that the others will join the Congress and work from within to affect the course of the country's politics. Dr. Besant has led the way in that direction. I know that she would have many things done otherwise, but she is content to come in hoping to bring round the electorate to her view by working within the Congress. The No-changers

can, in my humble opinion, vote for the agreement with a clear conscience. The only national program jointly to be worked by all the parties is *khaddar*, Hindu-Muslim unity and, for the Hindus, removal of untouchability. Is not this, after all, what they want?

### National Schools

One such is the maintenance of national educational institutions. Probably the public do not know that next to *khaddar* the running of national educational institutions has been the most successful. These can not be given up so long as even a few pupils are left. It must be a point of honor with the respective provinces to keep up their colleges and schools. Suspension of non-co-operation should not have any injurious effect on these institutions. On the contrary, greater effort than ever before should be made to maintain and strengthen them. Most provinces have their national schools and colleges. Gujarat alone has a national university maintained at an annual cost of Rs. 1,00,000, and having control of 3 Colleges and 70 Schools with 9,000 pupils. It has acquired its own ground at Ahmedabad and has already spent Rs. 2,05,323, in buildings. Throughout the country, fine and silent work has been done by the non-co-operating students. Theirs is a great and noble sacrifice. From a worldly stand-point they have perhaps lost the prospect of brilliant careers. I suggest to them however that from the national stand-point they have gained more than they have lost. They left their schools or colleges, because it was through them that the youth of the nation were insulted and humiliated in the Punjab. The first link in the chain of our bondage is forged in these institutions. The corresponding national institutions however inefficiently managed they may be, are the factories where the first instruments of our freedom are forged. After all, the hope of the future centers round the boys and girls studying in these national institutions. I therefore regard the upkeep of these institutions as a first charge on provincial funds. But these institutions to be truly national must be clubs for promoting real Hindu-Muslim unity, they must be also nurseries for training Hindu boys and girls to regard untouchability as a blot upon Hinduism and a crime against humanity. They should be training schools for expert spinners and weavers. If the Congress retains its belief in the potency of the spinning wheel and *khaddar*, one has a right to expect these institutions to supply the science of the spinning wheel. They should be also factories for *khaddar* production. This is not to say that the boys and the girls are not to have any literary training. But I do maintain that the training of the hand and the heart must go hand-in-hand with that of the head. The quality and the usefulness of a national school or college will be measured not by the brilliance of the literary attainments of its scholars but by the strength of the national character, and deftness in handling the carding bow, the spinning wheel and the loom. While I am most anxious that no national school or college should be closed, I should have not the slightest hesitation in closing down a school or college, that is indifferent to the admission of non-Hindu boys or that shuts its door against the entry of untouchables or that has not carding and spinning as an indispensable part of the training. The time is past when we can be satisfied with the word "national" on the sign-board of the school and the knowledge that it is not affiliated to any Government university or is not otherwise controlled by the Government. Also, I must not omit to point out that the tendency in many national institutions still is to neglect the vernaculars and Hindustani. Many teachers have not realized the necessity of imparting instruction through the vernaculars or Hindustani. I rejoice to observe that Sjt. Gangadhar Rao has arranged a meeting of national educationists to exchange experiences on the several points mentioned by me and to evolve, if possible, a general plan of education and action.

### Unemployed Non-Co-operators

This is perhaps the proper place to mention those lawyers who have given up practice, and school masters and other Government employees who have given up Government service at the call of the nation. I know that there are many such men who find it hard to make the two ends meet. They deserve national support. The Khadi Board and the national schools and colleges are the two services that can take in almost an unlimited number of honest and industrious men who are willing to learn and labor and are satisfied with a modest allowance. I observe a tendency not to accept any remuneration for national service. The desire to serve without remuneration is praiseworthy, but all can not satisfy it. Every laborer is worthy of his hire. No country can produce thousands of unpaid wholetime workers. We must therefore develop an atmosphere in which a patriot would consider it an honor to serve the country and accept an allowance for such service.

### Intoxicants

Another item of national importance is the liquor and the opium traffic. Had the wave of enthusiasm that swept across the country in 1921 in the cause of temperance remained non-violent, we would today have witnessed a progressive improvement. But unfortunately our picketing degenerated into violence, veiled when it was not open. Picketing had, therefore, to be abandoned, and the liquor-shops and opium-dens began to flourish as before. But you will be pleased to hear that the temperance work has not died out altogether. Many workers are still continuing their quiet and selfless service in the cause of temperance. We must, however, realize that we would not be able to eradicate the evil till we have *Swaraj*. It is no matter of pride to us that our children are being educated out of the revenue derived from this immoral source. I would almost forgive the Council entry by Congressmen, if they would boldly sweep out this revenue even though education may have to be starved. Nothing of the kind should happen if they will insist on a corresponding reduction in the military expenditure.

### Bengal Repression

You will observe that in the foregoing paragraphs I have confined myself to the internal developments.

But the external circumstances, and among them chiefly the acts of our rulers, are affecting our destiny no less surely (though it may be adversely) than the internal development. We may turn them to advantage if we will, or we may succumb to them to our disadvantage. The latest act of the rulers is the repression commenced in Bengal. The All Parties' Conference condemned it in no uncertain terms. The Conference had hesitation in saying that the blow was aimed at the Bengal *Swaraj* party. But I have none. I have been to Calcutta and had the opportunity of meeting men representing a variety of opinion and I came to the conclusion that the blow was aimed at the *Swaraj* party. The opinion is confirmed by the speeches since delivered by Lords Lytton and Reading. The defence they have offered is wholly unconvincing. Such a defence is

possible only in a place like India where public opinion counts for little or nothing. Lord Lytton's conditions of release are an insult to our intelligence. Their Excellencies beg the question when they tell us that the situation warranted the Ordinance and the action under the Regulation of 1818. The national contention is:

1. That the situation they describe has not been proved to exist;

2. That assuming that the situation does exist, the remedy is worse than the disease;

3. That the ordinary law contains enough powers for dealing with the situation; and lastly

4. That even if extraordinary powers were necessary they should have been taken from the legislature which is of their own creation.

The speeches of their Excellencies evade these issues altogether. The nation which has had considerable experience of unsupported statements of the Government will not accept them as gospel truth. Their Excellencies know that we cannot and will not believe their statements not because they are wilfully untruthful, but because the sources of their information have often been discovered to be tainted. Their assurances are therefore a mockery of the people. The speeches are almost a challenge to us to do our worst. But we must not be irritated or be impatient. Repression, if it does not cow us down, if it does not deter us from our purpose, can but hasten the advent of *Swaraj;* for it puts us on our mettle and evokes the spirit of self-sacrifice and courage in the face of danger. Repression does for a true man or a nation what fire does for gold. In 1921 we answered repression with Civil Disobedience and invited the Government to do its worst. But today we are obliged to eat the humble pie. We are not ready for Civil Disobedience. We can but prepare for it. Preparation for Civil Disobedience means discipline, self-restraint, a non-violent but resisting spirit, cohesion and above all scrupulous and willing obedience to the known laws of God and such laws of man as are in furtherance of God's laws. But unfortunately we have neither discipline nor self-restraint enough for our purpose, we are neither violent or our non-violence is unresisting, we have not enough cohesion and the laws that we obey, whether of God or man, we obey compulsorily. As between Hindus and Musalmans we witness a daily defiant breach of laws both of God and man. This is no atmosphere for Civil Disobedience—the one matchless and invincible weapon at the disposal of the oppressed. The alternative is undoubtedly violence. We seem to have the atmosphere for it. Hindu-Muslim fights are our training for it. And those who believe that India's deliverance lies through violence are entitled to gloat over the free fights that take place between us. But I say to those who believe in the cult of violence: "You are retarding India's progress. If you have any pity or friendly feeling for the starving millions, know that your violence will do them no service. Those whom you seek to depose are better armed and infinitely better organized than you are. You may not care for your own lives, but you dare not disregard those of your countrymen who have no desire to die a martyr's death. You know that this Government believes in Jallianwala Bagh massacres as a legitimate means of self-defense. Whatever may be true of other countries, there is no chance of the cult of violence flouishing in this country. India is admittedly the best repository and exponent of non-violence. Will you not better devote your lives, if you sacrifice them in the cause of non-violence?"

I know, however, that my appeal to the violent revolutionaries will be just as fruitless as any such appeal to the violent and anarchical Government is likely to be.

We must therefore find the remedy and demonstrate to both the violent Government and the violent revolutionaries that there is a force that is more effective than their violence.

### Repression a Symptom

I regard this repression as a chronic symptom of a chronic disease. The European dominance and Asiatic subjection is the formula. Sometimes it is stated still more cryptically as White vs. Black. Kipling miscalled the white man's yoke as the "white man's burden." In the Malaya peninsula the color bar that was thought to be temporary has now almost become a permanent institution. The Mauritius planter must get Indian labor without let or hindrance. The Kenya Europeans successfully lord it over Indians who have a prior right to be there. The Union of South Africa would today drive out every Indian if it safely could, in total disregard of past obligations. In all these cases the Government of India and the Imperial Government are not helpless; they are unwilling or not so insistent as they ought to be on the protection of Indian settlers. The Government of India have not shown even the decency to publish the report of its own Commission on Fiji.

The attempt to crush the indomitable spirit of the Akalis is a symptom of the same disease. They have poured their blood like water for the sake of a cause they hold as dear as life itself. They may have erred. If they have, it is they who have bled in the process. They have hurt no one else. Nankana Saheb, Guruka-Bagh, and Jaito will bear witness to their courage and their mute sufferings and martyrdom. But the Governor of the Punjab is reported to have vowed that he will crush the Akalis.

One hears that repression is crushing the Burmese spirit.

Egypt fares no better than we do. A mad Egyptian kills a British officer;—certainly a detestable crime. The punishment is not only a detestable crime, but it is an outrage upon humanity. Egypt has nearly lost all it got. A whole nation has been mercilessly punished for the crime of one man. It may be that the murder had the sympathy of the Egyptians. Would that justify terrorism by a power well able to protect its interests without it?

The repression in Bengal is therefore not an extraordinary thing. We must treat its periodic eruption in some shape or other or in some province or other, as our normal condition till we come to our own.

### Need for Sanction

The Congress, therefore, to be worthy of its trust must devise a sanction to back its demands. Before we can forge the sanction, we Hindus, Musalmans, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, etc., must unite and so should *Swarajists,* No-changers, Liberals, Home-Rulers, Muslim Leaguers and others. If we can but speak with a united voice and know our own mind, it would be well. If we can develop the power to keep foreign cloth from our land, it would be better. We are ready then for the sanction.

MY FAITH

Let me state my faith; as a Congressman wishing to keep Congress intact, I advise suspension of non-co-operation for I see that the nation is not ready for it. But as an individual, I cannot—will not—do so as long as the Government remains what it is. It is not merely a policy with me, it is an article of faith. Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience are but different branches of the same tree called *Satyagraha*. It is my *Kalpadrum* —my *Jam-i-Jam*—the Universal Provider. *Satyagraha* is search for Truth; and God is Truth. Ahimsa or Non-violence is the light that reveals that Truth to me. *Swaraj* for me is part of that Truth. This *Satyagraha* did not fail me in South Africa, Kheda, or Champaran and in a host of other cases I could mention. It excludes all violence or hate. Therefore, I cannot and will not hate Englishmen. Nor will I bear their yoke. I must fight unto death the unholy attempt to impose British methods and British institutions on India. But I combat the attempt with non-violence. I believe in the capacity of India to offer non-violent battle to the English rulers. The experiment has not failed. It has succeeded, but not to the extent we had hoped and desired. I do not despair. On the contrary I believe that India will come to her own in the near future, and that only through *Satyagraha*. The proposed suspension is part of the experiment. Non-co-operation need never be resumed if the program sketched by me can be fulfilled. Non-violent non-co-operation in some form or other, whether through the Congress or without it, will be resumed if the program fails. I have repeatedly stated that *Satyagraha* never fails and that one perfect *Satyagrahi* is enough to vindicate Truth. Let us all strive to be perfect *Satyagrahis*. The striving does not require any quality unattainable by the lowliest among us. For *Satyagraha* is an attribute of the spirit within. It is latent in everyone of us. Like *Swaraj* it is our birthright. Let us know it.

# Interrogatories Answered

By *M. K. Gandhi.*

During last month I had a hearty discussion with an English friend, who takes deep interest in matters Indian and who is anxious to serve India to the best of his ability. He asked me whether I would publish the gist of our conversation. I readily agreed but asked him to jot down the points he raised which he gladly did. I do not disclose the friend's name as the name does not matter. It is my views that matter because they are exciting some interest at the present moment. If I am a friend of Englishmen, as I claim to be, I must patiently answer all the doubts that may arise in their minds. The English friend put the questions not all on his own behalf but mostly on behalf of those Englishmen who had originally raised them.

Here are the questions with answers.

*What is the real purpose of your insistence upon the Khaddar program as a means of obtaining Swaraj?*

I am interested in the attainment of *Swaraj* only by non-violent and truthful means. This is possible only through a diligent and successful prosecution of the *Khaddar* program. *Swaraj* can be peacefully attained only if the whole Indian mass work as with one will, be it on ever so little a constructive and useful thing for ever so little a time. Such an effort presupposes national consciousness. This is possible only through the spinning wheel. It is not remunerative enough for individuals. It is therefore not enough incentive for an individual selfishly inclined. It is however, enough to raise at a bound the national prosperity in an appreciable manner. An increase of one rupee per head per year may mean nothing to the individual. But Rs. 5,000/- in a village containing a population of as many would mean the payment of land revenue or other dues. Thus the spinning wheel means national consciousness and a contribution by every individual to a definite constructive national work. If India can demonstrate her capacity for such an achievement by volutary effort she is ready for political *Swaraj*. Any lawful demand of a nation with a will of its own must prove irresistible. I have hitherto said nothing of the immense economic value of the wheel and its product *Khaddar*. For it is obvious. The economic prosperity of India must indirectly affect the course of her political history—even using the word "political" in its narrow sense. Lastly, when the exploitation of India by Lancashire ceases by reason of the ability of India through the Wheel to clothe herself and consequently to exclude foreign cloth and therefore also Lancashire cloth, England will have lost the feverish anxiety at any cost to hold India under subjection.

*This means revolutionizing the national taste? Do you expect to pursuade your countrymen to give up the use of foreign cloth?*

I do. After all I am asking for very little. Millions are indifferent as to what they wear. They merely look to the cheapness of the articles they buy. It is the middle class whose taste has to be revised. I do not think that the substitution of foreign cloth by *Khaddar* is an impossible task for them. Moreover, it should be remembered that nowadays it is possible for *Khaddar* to suit a large variety of tastes. And improvement in fineness is making steady progress. I am therefore of opinion that if any constructive work is capable of success, it is the *Khaddar* program.

*What do you mean by Swaraj and what are its limitations, if any?*

By *Swaraj* I mean the Government of India by the consent of the people ascertained by the vote of the largest number of the adult population, male or female, native born or domiciled who have contributed by manual labor to the service of the State and who have taken the trouble of having their names registered as voters. This Government should be quite consistent with the British connection on absolutely honorable and equal terms. Personally I have not despaired of the substitution for the present servile condition of equal partnership or association. But I would not for one moment hesitate to countenance or bring about complete severance if it became necessary, i.e., if the connection impeded India's full growth.

*To what extent are you committed to the program and methods of the Swaraj Party?*

I am personally committed neither to the program nor to the methods of the *Swaraj* party. As a congressman I recognize its undoubted influence in the country and therefore its right to represent the Congress—a right

which it now enjoys by arrangement but which it otherwise might have secured by a party vote.

*What are the relations between you and the leaders of that party?*

They are of a most cordial character. I give them the same credit for patriotic service and sacrifice that I would like to claim for myself.

*It has been stated that you have surrendered to Mr. Das—?*

The statement is true in the sense that I have avoided a quarrel among Congressmen. But it is not true if it is intended to convey the meaning that I have surrendered an iota of my principles.

*Was not your attitude on the Saha resolution different from the one you have now adopted?*

Not in the least. At the time of the Saha resolution I was opposing an internal error. At the present moment I am resisting external oppression based on erroneous assumptions. Moreover, my attempt then to secure consistency of conduct and control of the Congress executive by one party must not be confused with my action on the Saha resolution. The two things were totally different and were not even inter-related. As soon as I discovered that the attempt to secure unity of control led to bad blood, I retraced my steps and declared complete surrender to the *Swaraj* party.

*It has been stated that you have lost your moral authority by your surrender—?*

Moral authority is never retained by any attempt to hold on to it. It comes without seeking and is retained without effort. I am not conscious of loss of moral authority, for I am utterly unconscious of being guilty of any single act compromising my moral conduct. What I have undoubtedly lost is the intellectual co-operation of a large number of educated men in my presentation of the means of attaining *Swaraj,* e.g., the spinning wheel.

*Why do you insist upon non-co-operation while every one of the activities has failed? What is the purpose in speaking of its suspension?*

I do not insist now. But I do not admit that every one of the activities has failed. On the contrary, every activity of non-co-operation succeeded to an extent. I can speak only of its suspension because to me non-co-operation is a vital principle of life and because in my opinion it has done India and, if you will, the world an amount of good of which, at present, we have not adequate conception and also because, if I found an atmosphere of substantial non-violence and real co-operation among the people and if the end remained still unattained, I should not hesitate to advise its resumption by the nation.

*How do you propose to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem?*

By constantly insisting upon both the communities cultivating mutual respect and trust and by insisting upon Hindus surrendering out of strength to the Musalman in every mundane matter and by showing that those who claim to be nationalists and are in an overwhelming majority should stand out in any unseemly competition for legislative or administrative control. I hope also to achieve the end by demonstrating that real *Swaraj* will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words *Swaraj* is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.

*What is your own real attitude toward the English and your hope about England?*

My attitude towards the English is one of utter friendliness and respect. I claim to be their friend, because it is contrary to my nature to distrust a single human being or to believe that any nation on earth is incapable of redemption. I have respect for Englishmen, because I recognize their bravery, their spirit of sacrifice for what they believe to be good for themselves, their cohesion and their powers of vast organization. My hope about them is that they will at no distant date retrace their steps, revise their policy of exploitation of undisciplined and ill-organized races and give tangible proof that India is an equal friend and partner in the British Commonwealth to come. Whether such an event will ever come to pass will largely depend upon our own conduct. That is to say I have hope of England because I have hope of India. We will not for ever remain disorganized and imitative. Beneath the present disorganization, demoralization and lack of initiative I can discover organization, moral strength and initiative forming themselves. A time is coming when England will be glad of India's friendship and India will disdain to reject the proffered hand because it has once despoiled her. I know that I have nothing to offer in proof of my hope. It is based on an immutable faith. And it is a poor faith that is based on proof commonly so called.

# The Story of My Mind

V

The pioneer life had a considerable influence upon religion in all its phases. Those who found their way into the western country naturally gave their first attention to the securing of the means of subsistence, then to the providing of homes and the other adjuncts to decent living. Education received their early attention, and schools were provided as soon as possible. If the church lagged behind the other agencies of civilization, it was not wholly because the people were indifferent to religion. Wherever there was preaching it was usually well attended. Sectarian lines were not strictly drawn, and all denominations received a hearing. Any opportunity of assembly, of social fellowship, brought the people together; and they did not strictly inquire as to the doctrines to be presented. The result was that all sects were heard in a receptive spirit, and each had an opportunity to bring its claims to a fair examination.

It is to be noted, however, that the presence of the great elemental forces of nature had a marked effect on the pioneers, and in certain regions, at least, led to a recognition of the supernatural in an emphatic degree compared with the older communities. In some regions this tendency was aided by ignorance, and by the absence of those cultural forces which promote broad and rational thinking. From about 1775 to the middle of the nineteenth century revivalism was the dominant fact in connection with religion, in large degree promoted the feeling for the supernatural, and increased the tendency to credulity and superstition. Entire lack of contact with religion in its more sober and ethical developments promoted the growth of fanaticism and emotional excess.

Camp-meetings were frequently held, and they were attended by thousands. In the more northern regions the Methodists, and in the more southern the Presbyterians, largely fostered a religion of emotionalism and the supernatural. The wildest excitement often prevailed at the revival meetings, both in the open air and in the churches; and many were the persons who went into convulsions, who fell upon the ground in a deadly faint, and who gained "the power" which was sought for as an indication of a true religious experience. Not only were the more orthodox sects largely represented in these tendencies, but also such sects as the Shakers and the Mormons, both of which were present everywhere during the earlier part of the nineteenth century. The Shakers were great revivalists, and their meetings were not only numerous, but attended by remarkable results. Several communities grew out of their activities. The Mormons were equally zealous in proselyting for their sect, and won great numbers to their faith, though against the most bitter opposition. Many of the conditions of pioneer life promoted this strong tendency to revivalism and to the growth of new sects.

Another tendency presented itself, which was perhaps equally natural to the pioneer conditions. The break with the circumstances surrounding religion in the older communities, its orderliness and its ethical tone, had its effect in leading great numbers to disregard the forms and ceremonies of the churches. Revivalism and its excesses, and the growth of new and chaotic sects, disgusted many with all religions and with every form of ritual. Many persons who would have remained quiet and unobtrusive members of the churches in the communities where they were born, found under the new conditions freedom to express their distrust of, and lack of faith in, all the churches.

My observations and experiences, as well as my studies in more recent years, have convinced me that this skeptical attitude of mind was widespread in the middle period of the nineteenth century throughout the central western States. It was not organized, and it had little outward expression; but there was much of it, and it influenced very deeply the religious thinking of that period and region. It determined the attitude toward the religion of Abraham Lincoln, and it gave origin to the crusade of Robert G. Ingersoll against Christianity and the churches. In the seventies Francis E. Abbot, in his free religious journal called *The Index*, published in Toledo and then in Boston, advocated the organization of the freethinkers everywhere. The result was the formation of the Liberal League, which reached as many as four hundred local clubs, largely in the region to which I have referred. In this region *The Investigator*, published in Boston, the avowed advocate of the teachings of Thomas Paine, had a considerable circulation. Paine was a frequent object of pulpit attack and misrepresentation, for the simple reason that his opinions were widely accepted. Many of these infidels and freethinkers found an opportunity for an organized protest against the older religious teachings by means of the Spiritualists, Universalists, and Unitarians; and a goodly number of them connected themselves with the more liberal of the other Protestant denominations, if not as members of the churches, then as members of the congregations.

Some of the harsher teachings of the churches were rejected through the activities of such new dominations as the Universalists. Many turned away from the doctrine of an eternity of punishment for earthly sins, and of a literal hell of torment. These persons might be of every manner of thinking, of belief and unbelief; but they were drawn together by their common conviction that God is good and loving or by their belief that the future holds within it no place of torment for those who have failed in this world to conform to the standards of the churches. The Disciples or Christians represented two or three groups brought together by the conviction that the Bible is a sufficient creed for the church, and that each individual ought to be free to interpret it in his own manner. Outside of the churches might be found all forms of unbelief, from infidelity to atheism. All the heretics from Boston, including Emerson and Theodore Parker, were heard with keen appreciation.

Both these tendencies were combined in Spiritualism, which was essentially materialistic, rejected the older beliefs, and had a strong inclination to the supernatural. Its claims in regard to converse with the dead, its renewal of some of the oldest and most primitive faiths of mankind, its appeal to the immediate presence of the supernatural in the affairs of men, brought many to its acceptance, more especially because it seemed to give a palpable assurance of a future life. Some men of strong mental gifts, and of able political leadership, such as Robert Dale Owen, became ardent advocates of Spiritualism. Lincoln gave it his consideration, and he was inclined to its acceptance, even if he never actually connected himself with that body of religious adherents. A reader of Paine in his youth, a reader of Parker in his maturer years, a rationalist in much of his thinking, never a member of any church, during the trying years of the Civil war he showed a strong tendency to revert to a crude faith in the supernatural. In all this he was a most typical pioneer, combining skepticism and supernaturalism in a manner of his own.

The nearest church to the home of my parents was three and one-half miles away, at Galesburg. We never went there on Sunday, partly because we had no suitable conveyance, partly because we did not have such clothing as would have made our presence acceptable, and partly because my parents were not of a religious habit of mind. My father was brought up a Presbyterian, his father being a deacon. I suspect that in his case, as in that of many others, he was surfeited in youth with church attendance and with religious observances. He became in his mature years an infidel and freethinker. Whether he had read Thomas Paine I do not know, but I often heard him discuss the Bible from much the same point of view which Paine presented in his "Age of Reason."

In after years I learned that my mother had been brought up as a Universalist, that her family belonged to the church in Geneva, New York, and that she attended there in her childhood. I cannot recall that my parents ever attended church in my boyhood. That they were not wholly indifferent to religion may be seen in the fact that they became members of the Unitarian Church in Kansas City in their later years, though their home was a hundred miles from that city. Attendance was not possible, but they had come to think that membership in such an organization was desirable.

Meetings were held in our school-house from time to time by such preachers as chanced to come our way. These were mostly of the Methodist denomination, though others came occasionally. In my earlier years of attending such meetings I knew little in regard to church distinctions and cared less. I cannot recall that more than one or two families in our school-district at-

tended church in Galesburg, and I assume that many of them were Universalists or sympathized with some other form of religious liberality. Two or three of the boys in our school came from the family of a Methodist preacher, who had removed from Canada to Michigan, who had bought a farm in our neighborhood, but who did not often preach. With one of these boys, James Henry Potts, a few months my junior, I frequently came to blows. He was invariably the victor, since he was larger and stronger than I. After a time we became very good friends, and we were then as devoted comrades as we had before been combative enemies. He and his brothers went quite regularly to church at Galesburg with the family, and they frequently attacked me and my brothers because we were not pious and church-goers. On one Sunday, especially, when we were on our way to the Kalamazoo River for fish, and the Potts family were returning from church, did they beset us with sneers and laughter.

The religious meetings held in our school-house were of the revivalist order for the most part, and the setting-forth of religion was not adequate or liberal. It was usually ignorant, and approached the fanatical. If it were orthodox, it was not calculated to attract persons who were in sympathy with the broad humanitarian tendencies of the age. A Sunday-school was usually held in the school-house on Sunday afternoons during the summer months; but the teaching was very limited. We sang hymns which were a gross caricature of the higher religious sentiments, we repeated texts from the Bible or recited passages from the New Testament without any idea as to their meaning, and the managers thought they were giving the children important religious instruction. A few of the songs we sang have remained in my memory, and they impress me now with their utter unsuitableness to the needs of childhood, with their gross other-wordliness, and with their falsification of the more ethical teachings of the New Testament. One of these hymns contained these lines:

I want to be an angel,
And with the angels stand,
A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand.
There right before my Saviour,
So glorious and so bright,
I'd wake the sweetest music,
And praise him day and night.

Even more other-worldly and unsuitable to the needs of childhood was this other hymn:

On the other side of Jordan,
In the sweet fields of Eden,
Where the tree of life is blooming,
There is rest for the weary,
There is rest for you.

In spite of the false methods of teaching and the pernicious hymns, I was deeply interested in religion. I had a mystical and poetical turn of mind, and that which was great, impressive and beautiful deeply touched me. I often lay on my back under an oak-tree in the front yard of our house, looked up into the sky, and dreamed dreams of things marvellous, and of the mystery and grandeur of the world around and beyond. A fine sunset, the starry heavens at night, the poetry of all fine scenery appealed to me; and I found in all these incentives to that deeper religion of reverence, wonder, awe, and the mystery of life, which is more natural and more truly impressive than any ritual and creed of the church. Although I received no religious teaching at home, I came to accept the teachings which were common to the generation to which I belonged, or, rather, to the generation preceding my own. The traditional religious beliefs, those which had filtered down in general acceptance, were imbibed by me. In private conversation I heard no one talking about religion, and few persons about me lived as if they thought it of anything more than church and Sunday application.

I came to accept religion as something real, as a concern of much importance. It occupied many of my thoughts, and I was not a little concerned as to what I ought to do about it. No one about me shared, so far as I could judge, in the concern I felt; and I was too timid to make a confidant of any one. In this distress of mind, one day when the family was absent, I made the sign of the cross on my forehead, after dipping my finger in a pail of water standing at the well in the yard of the house. If this was not a genuine baptism in the eyes of the church, it gave me relief of mind, and it expressed crudely my desire for a better life and one truly religious.

I can recall that when a mere child I heard my father report to my mother what he had heard in regard to mysterious table-tippings and other strange phenomena which had occurred at some distance from our home. This was my introduction to Spiritualism, which was destined to hold a considerable place in my early life. In my older boyhood I heard much about it, although I did not come into immediate contact with it. When Eugene Bronson, one of the finest young men in our neighborhood, enlisted in the early part of the Civil War, and after serving for some time, was killed, a funeral service was held in our school-house. His family were Universalists, but they secured a preacher from Battle Creek, who had imbibed the Spiritualists' teachings. I can remember nothing of what he said, but I do vividly recall that he had his mouth filled with tobacco, and that he expectorated frequently into the corner of the room behind the teacher's desk.

In the early years of the settlement of Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and other States in that region, Mormonism was to be found everywhere, and its preachers were especially zealous in making converts. Before my birth was the period of its greatest activities, and it had been driven westward before my recollections begin. Through all my youth and early manhood I knew intimately of its influences and of its converts. My mother's oldest sister became a convert, married an elder, and removed to Salt Lake, where her life was spent. After some years she was obliged to submit to the taking of a second wife on the part of her husband. When I was a lad he came into our neighborhood as a missionary of his church, and he lived there for two or three years. I doubt if he made any converts, and it does not seem to me probable that he was able to hold any religious services. His mission was probably to the scattered Mormons who had not been able to remove to Utah. A family living near our school-house by the name of Vorse sold their farm some years later, the younger members of the family removed to far western States, but the mother made her way to Salt Lake; and then I learned that through many years she had remained faithful to the Mormon church, though the sect had been everywhere condemned and reviled.

My father's oldest sister had also been strongly drawn towards the Mormon church. In order to prevent her acceptance of its faith, and more especially to prevent her connecting herself with its membership, my father went to Nauvoo to investigate its teachings

## THE FIELD

*"The World is my country, to do good is my Religion"*

### THE SONG BIRD

When the evening steals on western waters,
Thrills the air with wings of homeless shadows,
When the sky is crowned with star-gemmed silence
And the dreams dance on the deep of slumber;
When the lilies lose their faith in morning
And in panic close their hopeless petals,
There's a bird which leaves its nest in secret,
Seeks its song in trackless paths of heaven.

—*Rabindranath Tagore.*
*Visva-Bharati Quarterly.*

### A SINGLE-HANDED EFFORT

Authentic and reliable literature concerning India and Gandhi is rare in this country. Readers of UNITY are singularly fortunate in that through its columns are presented from time to time reliable accounts of the momentous events that are transpiring in India today.

After spending my first two years in this country, travelling and lecturing, I became deeply impressed with the need for establishing a center for the publication and distribution of Gandhi literature. To meet that genuinely felt want, two years ago I started the Universal Publishing Co. of Chicago, with headquarters at 21 East Van Buren Street.

The Universal Publishing Co. is planning to publish the soul-stirring poems of Mrs. Naidu in the near future. To date its two important publications on India are my "Gandhi the Apostle, with a Panorama of Indian History" and Gandhi's "Sermon on the Sea."

Concerning "Gandhi the Apostle" the following comments and appreciations are worthy of note:

"Mr. Muzumdar has written an intelligent interpretation of the spirit of India. . . . Through this book the voice of Gandhi in prison speaks to us."—Robert Morss Lovett.

"Your survey of India and its history is remarkably complete. . . . The strength of your book is in the sections devoted to the life and trial of Gandhi. . . . The best thing available to American readers."—John Haynes Holmes.

"In these days when physical force seems to be uplifted over all, the story of Gandhi's non-resisting policy should be broadcast."—Oswald Garrison Villard.

"No one who lays the least pretense to acquaintanceship with the renascent East can afford to miss reading this book."—Chicago *Evening Post* Review.

Concerning "Sermon on the Sea," Gandhi himself says:

"In my opinion it is a book which can be put into the hands of a child. It teaches the gospel of love in the place of that of hate. It replaces violence with self-sacrifice. It puts soul-force against brute force. . . . This book is a severe condemnation of modern civilization."—Mahatma Gandhi.

"It (the book) is a remarkable presentation, in the form of a kind of Socratic dialogue, of the program of political independence and social regeneration which he (Gandhi) seeks to achieve through his method of non-co-operation or non-violent coercion. . . . Its publication in this country is a notable event."—John Haynes Holmes.

It is the good-will and co-operation of persons like the readers of UNITY that have sustained me in this effort of publishing good literature on India and Gandhi. I should like to see all readers of UNITY get acquainted with the two books mentioned above and thereby encourage me in further ventures along the same line.

HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR.
Universal Publishing Co.,
21 E. Van Buren St.,
Chicago, Ill.

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# Patriotism Is Not Enough

**By JOHN HAYNES HOLMES**

¶ The title is a direct quotation from Edith Cavell's last words, and the book is devoted to explaining what those last words really meant. "A citizen of America," says the author, "must in the end be a citizen of the world." Dr. Holmes attacks "stand-patism" and "normalcy," brands as "propaganda" the teaching of patriotism as it is now conducted in schools and colleges alike, and describes our common-school histories as being one-sided and provincial. He accompanies his destructive criticism with a constructive program of betterment. Withal, the book is written in a temperate, well-reasoned manner and shows profound learning.

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and its practices. When he was told that his life was in danger, he procured a pistol, made it known that he carried it, and was not molested. The result was that his sister did not ally herself with the Mormons. In later years I knew much of that form of Mormonism which flourished in Wisconsin under James J. Strang from 1844 to his murder, in 1856, on an island in Lake Michigan where he had led his followers. He prepared a Bible for his following as Joseph Smith did the Book of Mormon.

It was when I was sixteen that I came to know about Universalism, and to learn that my mother had been brought up in that belief. There came to one of the school-houses next south of us a preacher of that faith from northern Indiana. As was my habit, I attended these meetings, which were continued through several Sundays. The preacher gave his attention almost wholly to proving from the Bible that it taught universal salvation. The arguments seemed to me convincing, and I was drawn with considerable enthusiasm to that denomination. I began to read its periodicals, which I found were received by some of our neighbors. Such books as I could borrow devoted to the teachings of the sect I eagerly read. In fact, I became a confirmed Universalist. I was drawn to this sect because its doctrines seemed to me in conformity with the teachings of the Bible, because of their rationality and common sense, and because they were humane and just. It is true that my opinions were not of much value, but these teachings appealed to me as far more likely to be true than those I had previously heard. They seemed honorable to God and worthy of man.

GEORGE WILLIS COOKE.

(*To be continued.*)

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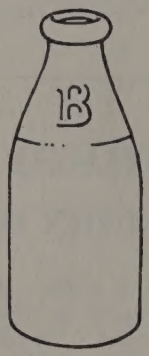

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